Digitized by Google

OLIN
PR
5110
83
72a

Digitized by Google

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
3 1924 091 302 137

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

In compliance with current
copyright law, Cornell University
Library produced this
replacement volume on paper
that meets the ANSI Standard
Z39.48-1992 to replace the
irreparably deteriorated original.

2001

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LOVE IN EARNEST:

A SEQUENCE OF FIFTY SONNETS IN THE SECOND PERSON.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LOVE IN EARNEST.

SONNETS, BALLADES, AND LYRICS.

BY

J. G. F. NICHOLSON.

LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
1892.

Digitized by Google

'Crave thou no dower of earthly things
Unworthy Hope's imaginings.
To have brought true birth of Song to be
And to have won hearts to Poesy,
Or anywhere in the sun or rain
To have loved and been beloved again,
Is loftiest reach of Hope's bright wings.'

D. G. ROSSETTI.

Digitized by Google

I Dedicate

THIS COLLECTION OF VERSES

TO THE

MEMORY OF

MY MOTHER,

WHO INCITED ME TO ITS PUBLICATION

BUT FELL ASLEEP ERE SHE SAW

ITS FULFILMENT.

Digitized by Google

For generous permission to re-print many of these poems the Author tenders his thanks to the Proprietors of *The Athenæum*, *Chambers' Journal*, *The Universal Review*, *Home Chimes*, *Time*, *Cassell's Saturday Journal*,* *Black and White*, and *The Magazine and Book Review*.

* For 'Serenade' and 'Whispered at Sunset.'

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

LOVE IN EARNEST.

		PAGE
	Dedication - - - - -	1
I.	Vain Resistance - - - -	2
II.	Self-Abandonment - - - -	3
III.	Hopeless Love - - - -	4
IV.	Held in Bondage - - - -	5
V.	My Soul's Garden - - - -	6
VI.	Revealed in Visions - - - -	7
VII.	Barriers Between - - - -	8
VIII.	Love's Dreamland - - - -	9
IX.	Spell-Bound - - - -	10
X	Love's Guerdon - - - -	11
XI.	Not Wisely - - - - -	12
XII.	Love's Martyrdom - - - -	13
XIII.	In the Night-Watches - - -	14
XIV.	Heart's Desire - - - -	15
XV.	Love Only - - - - -	16
XVI.	The Lake of Love - - - -	17

Digitized by Google

LOVE IN EARNEST (*continued*).

		PAGE
XVII.	Together	18
XVIII.	Out of Bondage	19
XIX.	Waiting	20
XX.	Life's Compensation	21
XXI.	Evensong	22
XXII.	Drifting Apart	23
XXIII.	Sowing in Tears	24
XXIV.	Love's Afterglow	25
XXV.	The Love of Old	26
XXVI.	Dark Days	27
XXVII.	Estranged	28
XXVIII.	Like Bells at Evening Pealing	29
XXIX.	Love's Topmost Peak	30
XXX.	Lætus Sorte Meâ	31
XXXI.	Through the Shadows	32
XXXII.	Love Militant	33
XXXIII.	Deathless Love	34
XXXIV.	My Heart's Treasures	35
XXXV.	Borrowed Grace	36
XXXVI.	Inexplicable	37
XXXVII.	Love's Loyalty	38
XXXVIII.	Looking Forward	39
XXXIX.	Love's Tyranny	40
XL.	Love's Sign and Seal	41
XLI.	In the Depths of the Sea	42

Digitized by Google

LOVE IN EARNEST (*continued*).

		PAGE
XLII.	Unspeakable Things	43
XLIII.	Love's Prescience	44
XLIV.	Love's Impotence	45
XLV.	Love's Good-Bye	46
XLVI.	Parting Words	47
XLVII.	Memories of Love	48
XLVIII.	Midsummer-Eve	49
XLIX.	Love-Dreams	50
L.	Forbidden Ground	51

BALLADES.

Of the Sundial	55
Of Early Summer	57
Of Summer Flown	59
Of Boys' Names	61
Of Modern Heroes	63
Of Belshazzar	65
Of Intercession	67
Of the Royal Jubilee Exhibition	69
Of Fame's Pursuers	71
Of Trifles	73
Of the Land of Love	75
Of Love's Sufficiency	77
Of Separation	79
Of Slighted Love	81

Digitized by Google

VILLANELLE.

PAGE
A Season of Silence - - - - 83

RONDEL.

St. Valentine's Eve - - - - - 85

RONDEAUS.

When Summer Dies - - - - 89
The Bells of Yule - - - - - 90
The Midnight Bells - - - - - 91
Secret Love - - - - - 92
'Tis Where You Are - - - - 93
Your Hand in Mine - - - - 94
On May-Day Morn - - - - 95

LYRICS AND SONGS.

Through the Gates of Sleep - - - 99
Shadows of Fate - - - - - 107
Whispered at Sunset - - - - 108
Outward Bound - - - - - 110
My Song of Songs - - - - - 112
A Distant Love - - - - - 114
Gone to Sleep - - - - - 116
Summoned to Dreamland - - - - 118
Love's Silence - - - - - 121
Heart's Hope - - - - - 123
Told in the Twilight - - - - 125

Digitized by Google

LYRICS AND SONGS (*continued*).

PAGE
Sunshine - - - - - - 127
Serenade - - - - - - 129
The Boy in the Boat - - - - 131
At Low Tide - - - - - 133
To Memory Dear - - - - - 135
Eighteen Hundred and Eighty-Eight - - 137
By the Sea - - - - - - 139
In White Array - - - - - 141
In Cloudland - - - - - 143
Love's Summer - - - - - 145
Three Phases - - - - - 147
Not Forgotten - - - - - 149
At Daybreak - - - - - 151
A Song of April - - - - - 153
The Drummer-Boy - - - - - 155

SONNETS FOR PICTURES.

The Last Mood of Lady Macbeth - - - 159
The First Madness of Ophelia - - - 160
Balaclava - - - - - - 161
A Desert Grave - - - - - 162
The Boyhood of Raleigh - - - - 163
St. William of Norwich - - - - 164
The Loud Bassoon - - - - - 165
Tit-Bits - - - - - - 166

Digitized by Google

TEN SONNETS ON 'THE ANCIENT MARINERE.'

PAGE

I. 'The Lighthouse-Top' - - - 169
II. 'The Mariners' Hollo' - - - 170
III. 'The White Moonshine' - - - 171
IV. 'The Silence of the Sea' - - - 172
V. 'The Bloody Sun' - - - - 173
VI. 'The Star dogged Moon' - - - 174
VII. 'The Shadow of the Ship' - - - 175
VIII. 'The Gentle Sleep' - - - - 176
IX. 'The Coming Wind' - - - 177
X. 'The Lightning and the Moon' - - 178

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

Nightfall: Teignmouth - - - - 181
The Promise of Spring: Buxton Gardens - - 182
Moonrise: Ashton-on-Mersey - - - 183
January Gloaming - - - - - 184
At the Turn of the Tide: Llysfaen Head - - 185
'Gainst Wind and Tide - - - - 186
Helping Hands - - - - - 187
A Garden of Sleep - - - - - 188
The Smithy by the Wood: Bryn Euryn - - 189
Moonlight on the Lake: Llanelian - - 190
Misty Twilight: Y Foel Fras - - - 191
Sunny Weather: Llyn Crafnant - - - 192

Digitized by Google

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS (*continued*).

	PAGE
The Grave-yard by the Sea: Llandrillo	193
Sunset Fires: Glyn Conwy	194
Rainy Daybreak: Fairy Croft	195
Autumn at the Moated Grange	196
Fairy Fountains	197
At a Ball	198
The Awakening of Iphigenia	199
Transplanted	200
An Old Hat	201
The Bell in June	202
The Bell in December	203
Jones at the Tournament. I.	204
Jones at the Tournament. II.	205
A Portrait	206
Farewell	207
The Cricket Captain	208
The Good Fight	209
Dick the Trumpeter	210
Rex Gloriæ	211
In the Churchyard	212
In Memoriam: A. L. M.	213
Dying in Summer	214
'With You Alway'	215
Love-Dawn	216
Conquering Love	217

Digitized by Google

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS (*continued*).

	PAGE
Love's Domain	218
For a Birthday	219
Disenchantment	220
Heart's Desire	221
Shipwreck	222
Love's Wisdom	223
Irreparable	224
Love's Mirage	225
Tongues in Trees	226
Love's Landmark	227
A Last Farewell	228
Idolatry	229
Through the Mist of Years	230

Digitized by Google

LOVE IN EARNEST.

DEDICATION

TO W. E. M.

SOME lightly love, but mine is Love in Earnest—
My heart is ever faithful while it hears
An echo of itself in thine, though years
Should pass ere its full passion thou returnest:
Thou Very Self of Love that in me burnest,
Let my verse tell thee of my hopes and fears,
My happiness and woe, my smiles and tears,
Till thou at last my life's devotion learnest.

Love, though thou seekest not my songs, nor yearnest
As I to walk for ever in Love's ways,
Accept—for they are thine—these heart-felt lays:
Since thou the gift refusest not nor spurnest,
Take, dear, this record of my Love in Earnest,
And thine, my darling, thine be all the praise!

Digitized by Google

I.

VAIN RESISTANCE.

HEN first the sunbeams glint upon the snow,
That clothes the hills with robes of dazzling white,
Coldly the crystals sparkle in the light,
Feel not its heat, nor fear its powerful glow;
But, as the genial rays intenser grow,
The garb of Winter quails beneath their might,
An icy flood pours downward from the height,
And in swift torrents seeks the vale below.

So when I first beheld thee, little one,
No quickening influence with the vision came;
But on my heart of adamant a flame
From thy bright eyes beamed forth as from a sun,
Till now—the work of Love within it done—
It dances at the mention of thy name!

Digitized by Google

II.

SELF-ABANDONMENT.

LIKE failing swimmer in an ebbing sea,
Who, struggling shorewards, breathless, dazed and blind,
Knows his quest hopeless in his inmost mind,
So fought I from thy glamour to be free;
And as he ceases striving uselessly,
Spreads his tired arms and, to his Fate resigned,
Is borne away without a look behind,
Thus have I yielded up myself to thee!

O, joy for him, to lie in peace at last,
With upturned face, and weary limbs at rest,
Rocked gently on the bosom he defied;
And happier I, whose conflicts all are past,—
Careless of reason's call and will's behest,—
Adrift upon Love's strong mysterious tide!

Digitized by Google

III.

HOPELESS LOVE.

VAINLY I strive to show by deed and word
How great my love for you, how deep and strong;
Daily you hear my heart's one passionate song,
And still pass on as though you had not heard;
Your slightest smile, your gentlest glance can gird
My suppliant life with joy that lingers long,—
You touch my hand, and straight a gladsome throng
Of hopes are born, and all my soul is stirred.

But ah, you do not understand nor see,
And when my looks of my devotion tell
You deem it but some pitiful wayward spell;
Love comes not my interpreter to be,
And in your eyes, because you love not me,
My greatest fault is loving you too well!

Digitized by Google

IV.

HELD IN BONDAGE.

ONE happy day—my brightest and my best—
You kissed me playfully,—a mere mad freak
Of which you will not, and I dare not speak,
And all it meant to me you never guessed;
For when with hopeless doubt I am oppressed,
Knowing my love so strong and yours so weak,
Once more I feel your lips upon my cheek,
And this one comfort lulls my care to rest.

You love me not, and yet (why should it be?)
You are my Life and Death, my Fate and Fere!
What makes the sun control this whirling sphere?—
What makes the moon command the patient sea?—
As little know I why you are to me
So strangely incommunicably dear!

Digitized by Google

V.

MY SOUL'S GARDEN.

IN dreams I saw the garden of my soul
All overrun with noisome worthless weed
That flourished high above the better seed,
Or round its roots in direful clusters stole ;
Then, ere the ruin grew beyond control,
Straightway I cried my garden should be freed
From evil growth, and toiled with earnest heed,
And thought my care had purified the whole.

But still one baneful plant rose up to meet
My searching glance ; right royally it grew,
Its odour wondrous soft, and bright its hue,
And while I gazed it took a semblance sweet,—
I dropped my powerless hand, for, lo, 'twas you ;
Then fell, and bowed my head upon your feet !

Digitized by Google

VI.

REVEALED IN VISIONS.

AST holden yesternight in dreamland's spell,
I saw a rampart in the cold moonshine
All clothed with clustering ivy and woodbine,
But dark and frowning as a dungeon-cell ;
Then lo, anon, a matchless miracle;
Though gibbering hosts, with all their strength malign,
Toiled long to tear away that growth benign,
Not a leaf loosened, nor a blossom fell !

Assist me, love, for I accept the sign,
Come thou to judgment, O my Daniel,
Prithee the true interpretation tell :
Is not the wall o'er which the tendrils twine
Thy stony heart? the clinging, flowery vine
My love for thee, dauntless, invincible?

Digitized by Google

VII.

BARRIERS BETWEEN.

DESPITE my depth of love, I always fear
To tell you all that I would have you learn,
You do not guess how fiercely love may burn,
You would not deem my ardent vows sincere ;
You look at me with steadfast gaze and clear,
As though my meaning you would fain discern,
Till to my hidden passion I return
Before the innocence that I revere.

I dare not say, I dare not even think
How much I love you, and all day I keep
The secret of my soul in hiding deep ;
But when at night I meet you on the brink
Of Dreamland's River, then I never shrink
From pouring out my love to you in sleep.

Digitized by Google

VIII.

LOVE'S DREAMLAND.

LOVE, last night I had a dream divine:
We sailed together o'er a moonlit sea,
But, as it ever was, there seemed to be
That bridgeless gulf between my soul and thine;
Then mists rolled up through which no light could shine,
The billows rose, and tempest-tossed were we,
And then thou openedst out thine arms to me,
And thy soft cheek came gently meeting mine.

And, waking, I gave thanks for dreams so sweet,
And rose and went rejoicing on my way,
For all these portents in my memory stay,
And help to make my certainty complete
That thou wilt stoop to gather up, some day
The heart that lies for ever at thy feet!

Digitized by Google

IX.

SPELL-BOUND.

WHAT shall it profit me when life is past—
This little life that flies so soon away —
If I have gained your favour, and can say
That my strong love has won its crown at last?
While I am suing time is fleeting fast,
And, at the evening of my earthly day,
Can you be my eternal strength and stay,—
You, upon whom all faith and hope I cast?

Love, love, you have my heart and soul and will;
No power is mine, no wisdom of my own
Since this consuming passion I have known;
I fain would seek for higher things, but still
My life and death, my future good and ill,
Are bound, despite myself, in you alone!

Digitized by Google

X.

LOVE'S GUERDON.

DEAREST, why take such gifts of paltry price?
The smiles and flatteries on your altar laid
Are worthless when in Love's just balance weighed:
You still unbar the gates of Paradise
To guarded vows of hearts as cold as ice,—
Kisses of sordid souls that would be paid;
When will your judgment call in reason's aid,
And learn to measure Love by sacrifice?

I suffer martyrdom for your sweet sake,
The cross I bear, the chain that wraps me round,
Fills my faint soul with happiness profound;
What though my tortured heart at last should break?
My love has gained its guerdon at the stake,
Perfect through pain, because of suffering crowned.

Digitized by Google

XI.

NOT WISELY.

I DO not look to Wealth for happiness,
For I have learned that riches cannot stay:
Neither for Fame and Honour do I pray,
Which have no lasting power my life to bless;
No slavery to Knowledge I confess;
No homage I to Crownèd Labour pay,
I know the tide of Time will sweep away
Its sand-built works, and leave it profitless.

It is your favour, dearest, that I prize,
I seek my soul-content in you alone,
Of all my joys this is the corner-stone:
I know not how in this thing to be wise,
Because the magic splendour of your eyes
Shadows the light of Wisdom with its own.

Digitized by Google

XII.

LOVE'S MARTYRDOM.

LOVE sits at even on his Olivet,
And to his Sion turns his longing eyes,
When in the cool of day the shadowy skies
Are streaked with purple where the sun has set;
This is the very hour of peace, and yet
Love's bosom heaves with oft-repeated sighs;
Before him, calm and fair, his City lies,
And still his gentle cheek with tears is wet.

Alas for Love, whose heart so soon shall break!
Love knows, thou careless one, and weeps for thee
Who hurriest him to his Gethsemane;
E'en now he feels his scourgèd shoulders ache,
And staggers 'neath his cross, and for thy sake
Toils up the hillside to his Calvary!

Digitized by Google

XIII.

IN THE NIGHT-WATCHES.

OU touched my hand and simply said, *Good-night*,
And, haunted by your voice and smiling face,
I seized my pen, and sat down for a space
The story of my changeless love to write;
In praise of you my verse flowed smooth and bright
As on I went, forgetting time and place,
Till, lo, the hours of dark had sped apace,
And dawn peeped in upon me, pearly-white.

So with my love-songs, written for your sake,
I lingered, ghost-like, just without your door,
Then passed on in the early morning beams;
And Love's sweet music kept me still awake,
Till, when broad daylight streamed across the floor,
I fell asleep and kissed you in my dreams!

Digitized by Google

XIV.

HEART'S DESIRE.

NOW have I reached at last the topmost height
Of happiness, the summit of my bliss;
After long weeks of waiting, one soft kiss
Has been the guerdon of Love's arduous fight:
Far-off, save in the visions of the night,
This joy I lived to gain and feared to miss,
Till at my passionate prayer you granted this,
And touched my cheek with tender lips and light.

My darling, O my darling, all in vain
They speak to me of thoughts and longings higher,
Your kiss has been my soul's one altar-fire;
What aspirations then for me remain?—
There can be now no brighter crown to gain,
No purer, holier heaven to desire!

Digitized by Google

XV.

LOVE ONLY.

SURELY my heart should now have found repose,
Though with consuming fires it long has burned,
For thou hast heard me speak, and hast not spurned
The love I oft have panted to disclose ;
But now I suffer stronger, deadlier throes,
Since, sick with doubt and secret flames, I turned
And told thee all, and from thy sweet lips learned
Thou wouldst not leave me hopeless in my woes !

Ah, love, it is thy pity that I dread !
What if I moved thee with my prayers and tears
To yield, in will's despite, that self I sought ?
If thus it be, forget the words I said
And leave me to my older doubts and fears,
For I will have thy love, or else have naught !

Digitized by Google

XVI.

THE LAKE OF LOVE.

NOW, safely launched upon Love's sunlit Lake,
Shall we, while pressing onward to the shore
That crowns our journey, hear for evermore
The melody the songful zephyrs make?
Shall we feel only, as our way we take,
The gentle tide we sail so softly o'er,—
See but calm waters stretching far before,
And sparkling ripples dancing in our wake?

Nay, but our Summer cannot always last,
Soon will the billows roar and tempests rise,
Round us the mist its baleful curtain cast,
And gathering clouds obscure our smiling skies
Yet still, through storm and shine, till Life be past
We'll steer to lands where Summer never dies.

Digitized by Google

XVII.

TOGETHER.

DO you remember how we stood to rest
When the November afternoon was bright?—
How you and I, all bathed in golden light,
Together saw the sun sink in the West?—
And then, as up the steep hill-side we pressed,
How still we kept the setting orb in sight,
And, higher climbing, seemed to stay his flight
Behind the heathery moorland's distant crest?

Ah so, thought I, throughout Life's little Day,
Even I, if upward be my course and true,
May gaze upon a nobler light for aye,
And keep Love's Sun for evermore in view:
And to the heights that darkness storms in vain
With you I felt I might perchance attain.

Digitized by Google

XVIII.

OUT OF BONDAGE.

I KNOW not if thou hast the power divine
To banish evil passions with thy gaze—
Prerogative of him who fasts and prays;
But this is certain: when your eyes meet mine,
Like stars that cheerily at midnight shine,
They pierce my gloom of spirit with their rays;
No more I wander in unholy ways,
Led forth from darkness by a look of thine.

Ah love, cease not upon me thus to smile,
I am so weak, so blind, so prone to sin;
But thou from slippery paths my feet canst win
And silence every voice that would beguile,
Canst bring me to my better self awhile,
And save me from the snares that hem me in!

Digitized by Google

XIX.

WAITING.

I WAITED for you, dear, an hour ago,—
Nature dismissed the day in mood serene,
And Night, with stealthy tread and frosty mien,
Crept onward ere the West had ceased to glow
With sunset fires; a crescent moon hung low
In the darkening sky and silvered all the scene,
And, lustrous rival of her pallid queen,
Venus her glittering crest began to show.

But when your step came ringing through the wood
Methought the splendour from the heavens had fled
To crown you with its radiance clear and faint,
For, as with smiling upturned eyes you stood,
The lingering light about your fair round head
Shone softly, like the glory of a saint.

Digitized by Google

XX.

LIFE'S COMPENSATION.

OUR soul's white wings are so unsullied, dear,
So strong and fair, and free from spot of blame,
Because they have not hovered round the flame
That has such woeful power to scorch and sear;
Your bright young spirit never ventured near
The dazzling torch that borrows Wisdom's name
To lure those pinions to disgrace and shame
That have not learned to falter or to fear.

Yet, dearest heart, you deign to take my hand,
And O, how full to me Life's recompense,
If between you and evil I may stand,
And fashion out of my great love a fence
To shield your purity and innocence,
Though deeply marked myself with passion's brand!

Digitized by Google

XXI.

EVENSONG.

WHEN dying day shot down its arrows red,
The sweet-voiced priest intoned the evening prayer,
And a broad shining shaft of radiance fair
Slanted athwart the shadowy choir, and shed
Its glowing aureole round his silver head,—
Fell o'er the white-robed choristers kneeling there,
And lit the organ-pipes, whose scarce-breathed air
On vocal stops the low responses led.

Love, you were with me where the darkness fell,
Silently side by side we bowed the knee,
Faint o'er the altar gleamed the candles seven;
And on my spirit came Love's holy spell,—
The little church was Paradise to me,
And that dim chancel was the Gate of Heaven!

Digitized by Google

XXII.

DRIFTING APART.

THE shining sea lay stretched beneath our feet,
Its gentle ripples washed the silver sand,
They rose and fell, and broke in murmur bland,
And surged along with soft and ceaseless beat;
There, with the shifting tide around our seat,
We lingered long, but could not understand
If upwards still it stole upon the strand
Or drifted out another shore to greet.

Love, are we drifting thoughtlessly apart?
They say it, but I will not deem it true,—
I swerve not for a moment, night or day;
O, say that thou remainest true in heart,
Ah, tell me, dearest, thou art steadfast too,
And drive my doubts for evermore away!

Digitized by Google

XXIII.

SOWING IN TEARS.

WE waste our labour and our precious corn
Whene'er in fields unploughed the seed we sow,
Unless we break the stubborn earth below
No golden harvest will those fields adorn;
Therefore by pitiless share the glebe is torn,
And raked by ruthless teeth, because we know
In soil thus tilled the tender blade will grow,
And clothe with richest green the land forlorn.

So for your own dear sake I roused your fears,
And ploughed deep furrows in your shrinking soul
Until your anguish grew beyond control;
You saw not how I trembled at your tears,
But, if my words fell harsh upon your ears,
Dearest, be sure 'twas Love ordained the whole!

Digitized by Google

XXIV.

LOVE'S AFTERGLOW.

OUR boat rocked gently on the rippling bay,
While all the golden glow of sunset skies
Centred in your unfathomable eyes,
In whose blue depths serene my whole world lay;
It was the evening of the longest day,
Soft light fell on the sea in wondrous wise,
I stole your hand,—you feigned a grave surprise,
Then turned your look and silent lips away.

Now that the gulf between our hearts grows wide,
Sometimes, when you have sought my smile in vain,
These old June memories surge back amain,—
Sweep in upon me like a rushing tide,
Break down the stubborn barrier of my pride,
And quicken my dead love to life again!

Digitized by Google

XXV.

THE LOVE OF OLD.

FOR me you strove to curb your spirit bold,
'Twas for my sake you learned to watch and wait,
To conquer aught that might engender hate,
To fight those perilous moods that o'er you rolled;
I loved you as you were, but Love grew cold,
And by a cruel chance and bitter fate
My fickle heart forsook you, and too late
Were all those efforts and that strife untold.

Return once more!—once more your trust shall win
My lost affection, all too prone to stray;
I have bethought me of your war within,
Your sorrow when from you I turned away;
Come back! the barriers break, the clouds grow thin,
Old Love has stormed my heart and won the day!

Digitized by Google

XXVI.

DARK DAYS.

OU shun me, dearest, and your downcast eyes
Forget to beam upon me as of yore,
I miss the smile I caught so oft before,
Your lips are silent, whose least word I prize,
And oh, 'twas I who caused these tears and sighs;
Yours am I still, but, grieved and wounded sore,
You would not listen now, though I should pour
My sorrow at your feet in mourner's guise.

Love, love, can my contrition bow your pride?
A thousand tokens speak your anger fled;
My heart was broken and for mercy cried
The moment that those bitter words were said:
Ah, better far for me that I were dead,
If you from me your face for ever hide!

Digitized by Google

XXVII.

ESTRANGED.

IN spite of spleen and barriers between,
To thee I ever turn by night or day,—
Thy wounded pride must keep thee far away,
Yet all those bitter words I did not mean:
Sad tears I shed to think what we have been,
Thine image lies within my breast for aye,
And thoughts of thee with me must ever stay,—
My soul must ache, my heart must break unseen!

Oh, it can never be that this will last!
I love thee with a love so deep and strong,
I worship all the ground thou walk'st along!
Ah, now thou tak'st my hand as in the past,—
Joy sets my light heart-pulses beating fast,
Love turns to gladness all my mournful song.

Digitized by Google

XXVIII.

LIKE BELLS AT EVENING PEALING.

THE Summer-sun casts shadows cool and gray
In the still hour when night and morning meet—
The rushing tide flows first with gentle beat—
The coming storm sounds faint from far away:
And, o'er the land that gasped in noontide ray,
The dusk of twilight follows glare and heat—
The flood ebbs out with murmurings vague and sweet—
A breathless calm succeeds the tempest's sway.

Faint dawned our souls' estrangement in its prime,—
Then scorched our Love, and drowned it pitilessly,
And as with thunder shook it mightily:
And now the memories of that mournful time
Come back as faint as a far-off vesper chime
By a chance breeze borne to us fitfully.

Digitized by Google

XXIX.

LOVE'S TOPMOST PEAK.

LONG have we laboured up the pathway sheer,
And from this mountain-height, our lofty goal,
We gaze around us; far beneath, the whole
Dim valley of shadow lies,—no more we fear
Its terrors, but how comes it that e'en here—
Here, where we deemed no breath of sorrow stole—
At times these clouds of darkness o'er us roll,
These misty vapours fill our atmosphere?

Dearest, we must climb higher yet, for still
Towers tall above our heads Love's sunlit crown,
Where light beams ever, and clear breezes blow;
Once more our pilgrim-feet must mount the hill,
And, as we to that golden summit go,
Look how the haze of doubt is drifting down!

Digitized by Google

XXX.

LÆTUS SORTE MEÂ.

BECAUSE by such an easy road I came
To this, the summit of my earthly weal,
How blest I am I do not always feel;
I look into your eyes, and hourly frame
Excuse to make you smile and speak my name,
Beside you I may stand, or sit, or kneel,
I whisper in your ear, your hand I steal,
And feed with kisses Love's undying flame.

Then sometimes comes to me the dreadsome thought,—
What if for months and years I saw you not,
Nor knew if you remembered or forgot?
But now has Fate to me the whole world brought,
So by its tears unshed my heart is taught
To cry with rapture, *Happy is my lot!*

Digitized by Google

XXXI.

THROUGH THE SHADOWS.

THE twilight dim was stealing o'er the land,
The pallid sun set in a wintry sky,
And in the West, as if 'twere loth to die,
The light still lingered in a golden band;
But thou and I the Eastern heaven scanned,
Where louring clouds of blackest hue loomed high,—
Left the bright glow behind, and with a sigh
Stepped forth into the darkness hand in hand.

Ah, love! with thee I cannot feel afraid,
Though we have turned our backs upon the light,
Though Joy lies far behind, and Sorrow's night
Hangs o'er our path with sable wing displayed;
Through all Life's mystic march, in sun or shade,
Thy presence still shall arm me for the fight!

Digitized by Google

XXXII.

LOVE MILITANT.

SUMMONED to battle for thy sake, young Love
Has donned his armour bright, and ta'en the field,
His trenchant blade, edged by thy smile, to wield;
Thy ring upon his finger shines, thy glove
Gleams in the casque his eager brow above;
Late he was fain to thy soft wiles to yield,
But, since this sterner challenge on his shield,
Forgotten are the olive and the dove.

For through his dreams he heard a trumpet blow,
As Alpine peasants hear, far down the abysm,
The thunder of the coming cataclysm;
And dauntless still his step shall be, although
Fate stand full-armed across his path, and show
Incontrovertible antagonism.

Digitized by Google

XXXIII.

DEATHLESS LOVE.

WHEN joyous Summer from the woods had flown
And gusty breezes shook the lonely glade,
The forest leaves a gentle murmur made,
Though plucked by Autumn's hand and downward thrown;
For when the wandering wind that they had known
In greener beauty o'er those fallen strayed,
Withered and sere, its voice they still obeyed,
And stirred beneath the power they loved to own.

And thus, when I know neither joy nor pain,
But sleep the peaceful slumber of the dead,
If you, dear love, should pass with gentle tread
Where for long years my quiet dust had lain,
Your well-remembered footstep o'er my head
Would wake my silent heart to life again.

Digitized by Google

XXXIV.

MY HEART'S TREASURES.

I SAW it in the visions of the night—
The jewel-casket of my soul—and gazed
Upon its priceless gems; there rubies blazed
And glittering diamonds flashed back the light;
As planets of the heavens they shone bright
With glowing beauty worthy to be praised,
But, still unsatisfied, my eyes half-dazed
Sought out one lustrous pearl that shrank from sight.

Then in my dream (ah, love, such dreams are true!)
On that pure pearl my gladdened glance I set,
Rejoiced all other jewels to forget,
And cried your name; for, dearest, are not you,
Deep hidden in my heart from all men's view,
My life's best star, my soul's one amulet?

Digitized by Google

XXXV.

BORROWED GRACE.

BASE as I am, my longings sometimes fly
To worthier life, to better, holier thing
And I am filled with pure desire whose
Are not in me,—so weak, so vile am I:
Then have I paused amazed, and wondered why
This gracious mood comes over me and brings
Such aspirations, till my questionings
Have in my love for you found full reply.

It is from you I gain whate'er is sweet,
Of all these thoughts I see the reason clear,—
I sit so often, dearest, at your feet,
And hold your hand, and meet your gaze sincere,
And sleep in knowledge of our trust complete,
And wake from dreams of you to find you near.

Digitized by Google

XXXVI.

INEXPLICABLE.

STRANGE, that I count it not my highest bliss
To draw you close to me at day's decline,
To gaze into your eyes, your hand in mine,
And breathe your breath, and feel your tender kiss;
Strange is it that, at such a time as this,
Should come regrets my soul cannot define,—
A bitterness that mingles with Love's wine,
So that the perfect joy of Love I miss!

But if by chance I pass you in the street,
And see the quick flush to your forehead start,
Or if at church, when standing far apart,
All suddenly our wandering glances meet,
Then, while I feel my happiness complete,
Love's whitest flower blossoms in my heart!

Digitized by Google

XXXVII.

LOVE'S LOYALTY.

MY very thoughts are yours, and all their springs
Back to the fount of Love in you I trace,
You are my Prize and Goal in Life's long race,
And the one Law that rules my wanderings ;
So insignificant are other things
Beside your welfare, that the pride of place
Could never spur my spirit's flagging pace,
Only that honour to your name it brings !

Even in dreams I own Love's potent sway,
And, waking oft when half the night is sped,
Find your name ringing in my drowsy head ;
And, conscious but a moment's space, I pray,
God bless my darling ! whether far away
You sleep, or but ten paces from my bed.

Digitized by Google

XXXVIII.

LOOKING FORWARD.

IOLETS you gave me, dearest, white and blue,
And as I gazed upon those flow'rets rare,
Faint type I deemed them of the donor fair,—
Than you less sweet, less innocent and true;
Longtime deprived of sun or rain or dew
They almost perished, but with tender care
Once more they blossomed, and perfumed the air
With fragrance, aye reminding me of you.

So, if my love for you should ever fade,
Revived 'twould be by memories of the Past,
Tender as Summer dew and April showers,—
Thoughts of the days your presence happy made,
The joyous time when flourished, fair and fast,
A fond affection odorous as the flowers.

Digitized by Google

XXXIX.

LOVE'S TYRANNY.

I SOMETIMES wish, when others throng you round
And touch your hand and sigh, or stand and stare,
That you were not so marvellously fair ;
I watch you whisper in a gloom profound,
You laugh, and, lo ! I tremble at the sound ;
I chafe and fret that anyone should dare
To taste my happiness, my joy to share,
And venture on my own enchanted ground !

Then afterwards I make you disavow
All lovers but myself beneath the sun ;
It is no wrong, my darling, you have done,—
No fault of yours that every heart you bow,
And yet I cannot rest till I learn how
Of all those hearts mine is the dearest one !

Digitized by Google

XL.

LOVE'S SIGN AND SEAL.

LOVE, since thou doubtest if I hold most dear
My art or thee, and biddest me confess
Division of my hope and happiness,
Lo, now I answer thee with conscience clear:
Dispel the unworthy thought, the anxious fear
That aught but thee alone my life could bless,
And—more I cannot say, nor will say less—
Myself I yield to thee in love sincere!

Love and my art are one: canst thou not see
How poor and worthless is this verse of mine,
Unless thyself appear in every line?
Even as my body bears the marks of thee,
So could I ever wish my verse to be,—
On every page impressed Love's seal and sign.

Digitized by Google

XLI.

IN THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA.

'TIS not for you Love's Ocean to explore,
Though tenderly the level land it laves,
Though moonbeams dance along its rippling waves,
And luminous spray falls sparkling from the oar ;
Enough for you to pace its shelving shore,
And picture to yourself its hidden caves
With domes and pillared aisles and architraves,
While at your feet I lay its glittering store.

Mine be it to descend amid the roar
Of deep-sea currents where the storm-fiend raves,
And stumble o'er its hulks and shattered staves,—
To stand aghast its goodly wrecks before,
Where bones gleam white through some half-open door,
And monsters grin above the dead men's graves !

Digitized by Google

XLII.

UNSPEAKABLE THINGS.

BECAUSE, forsooth, I care not to repeat
The secrets that our souls together gained,
They say 'twas lightest love within us reigned,—
Dearest, you know if this be truth complete?
Have we not heard Love's summons, strangely sweet,
To its last dregs his cup of passion drained,
And trodden his red winepress till it stained
With dark indelible prints our faithful feet?

Ah, love, I cannot sing of all I know!
We have our hidden past, dear, you and I,
Where things unutterably precious lie;
But they are for us two alone, and so
I dare not tell my deepest joys, nor show
My heart of hearts to every passer-by!

Digitized by Google

XLIII.

LOVE'S PRESCIENCE.

BITTER and sweet beyond comparison
The memories of Love's harvest-field I keep !
God gave us certain sunny hours to reap,
And this at parting when the day was done :—
The moon cast both our shadows into one,
Orion lay aslant along the steep,
All night, you said, *with folded hands I sleep*
At times like these, when days are halcyon !

Then at that word—I knew not how nor why—
There came, as from a dreamland leagues away,
Dim presage of a not far distant day,
When 'neath the same stars I should see you lie,
That smiling face turned silent to the sky,
And those fair fingers clasped, as cold as clay !

Digitized by Google

XLIV.

LOVE'S IMPOTENCE.

A SAD soft colour in the sunset-skies ;
Dark clouds that drift o'er spaces amber-clear
Above the tree-tops ; through the silence drear
The voice of an ebbing sea that sobs and sighs ;
And on your face, whence all the gladness dies,
A wistful look that tells of dawning fear,
A new unwonted whisper at your ear,
A vague indefinite shadow in your eyes.

O that my love could chase your care away,
And drive this first faint sorrow from your breast,—
But the dim Future heeds not Love's behest ;
Powerless am I the Unseen to know or stay,
And yet, throughout Life's long mysterious day,
God grant, my darling, that you may have rest !

Digitized by Google

XLV.

LOVE'S GOOD-BYE.

TO-NIGHT we stood and watched the sunset-glow
Whose fading fires lit all the Western sky ;
Fast-deepening twilight round us, you and I
Rested awhile, and saw the shadows grow ;
The brightness from the fields was waning slow,
And silent eve was bidding daylight die,
Night spread her dusky mantle out on high,
Darkness lay o'er the path where we must go.

Ah, love, it was to me a fateful sign,—
I know that you from me must pass away,
Nor can it but be dark when you depart ;
Yet, through all absence, you will still be mine,
And though Fate's finger part our lives for aye,
Distance will fail to sever heart from heart !

Digitized by Google

XLVI.

PARTING WORDS.

AH, love, that wild wet evening in July,
When you came plashing down the gusty lane,
And met me roaming in the Summer rain,
Disconsolate, beneath a clouded sky,
How strangely mute, how wondrous weak was I!
I knew I ne'er might hold your hand again,
And yet, my full heart striving all in vain,
Could only stammer forth a last Good-bye.

But oh, what better words could I have said?
I know not if you ever think of me,
If you remember now that day long dead
And love its memory still, I cannot tell;
But this I know,—whate'er, where'er you be,
If God be with you, dear, then all is well!

Digitized by Google

XLVII.

MEMORIES OF LOVE.

TOGETHER down the River of Years we glided,
Where ripples with a gladsome sheen were glowing;
With storm-clouds clothed our Heaven was darker growing,
But, blindly bold, the omen we derided,
Till Fate to separate ways our fond barks guided,
And, on our hearts unthinking and unknowing,
The spell of an eternal absence throwing,
Love at its fullest flush from Life divided.

Ah well, 'twere better so! a beauteous flower
Full-blooming sheds its petals in a shower
If shaken by the wild-bird's passing pinion;
But from the stem the open blossom sever,
Its fragrance it will faintly keep for ever,
And over it Death shall not have dominion

Digitized by Google

XLVIII.

MIDSUMMER-EVE.

SOFT light lies o'er the land; the rosy gleam
Fades on the drifting cloud to pearly gray;
Over the meadows, sweet with breath of hay,
The evening-star sheds down its first faint beam;
But, back to Winter borne on memory's stream,
Ah, I remember, dear, how day by day
For this we loved to watch and hope and pray,—
The golden Summer of our happy dream.

Now, after sunset, while the dewdrops fall,
A yearning comes thy distant face to see;
From the dim fields I hear old voices call,
The cool of the day brings passion back to me,
And what care I for all fair things that be,
When thou art absent, thou, my all in all?

Digitized by Google

XLIX.

LOVE-DREAMS.

YOU come to soothe my solitude to-night,
Thrice-blessèd vision, ne'er invoked in vain,—
Your spell is on my spirit once again:
Out of the dark your golden head gleams bright,
Upon my hand your loving grasp is tight,
Flashes your smile like sunshine through the rain,
Your voice breathes softly as a sweet refrain;
You stir my heart-strings with resistless might!

O love, we parted thus in days of yore,
Unwonted dimness in your laughing eye,
And that last lingering look upon your brow;
Though your fond little fingers nevermore
Be clasped in mine, that memory cannot die,
For as I loved you then I love you now!

Digitized by Google

L.

FORBIDDEN GROUND.

IT is my glory, dearest, and my pride
To honour you in thought and deed and word,
To sing your praises ever, as a bird
Pours forth one gladsome song and naught beside,
But of the hours that Love has sanctified.
No joys must e'er be told nor memories stirred,—
Too deep the things that I have seen and heard
Through portals of my Paradise flung wide.

Hid in my secret soul's securest cell
They lie, and if through bars that intervene
I dare to break, to think of what has been,
And to my own heart all its raptures tell,—
Then I, of these sweet things unspeakable,
Say only, *I have heard and I have seen!*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

BALLADES.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

OF THE SUNDIAL.

To E. L. N.

'*Horas non numero nisi serenas.*'—OLD MOTTO.

N old rose-garden, quaintly set
Within a ring of lilac-trees,
All over-run with mignonette,
The chosen haunt of birds and bees;
'Tis here, 'mid Nature's melodies
I stand, encircled by the flowers,
And o'er my face Time's shadow flees,—
I only number sunny hours.

From early dawn, when dews gleam wet
On rosebuds nodding in the breeze,
And gem the spider's banneret—
The fairest sight the great sun sees,
I measure all the Day's degrees,
Till evening comes and steals my powers;
Of Night's grim gates I hold no keys,—
I only number sunny hours.

Digitized by Google

The joyous Summer fades, and yet
I mourn not Nature's firm decrees;
Each year I see without regret
The swallows leave by twos and threes;
Winter must come,—dull skies that freeze,
Chill blasts that shake the leafless bowers,
But I record not times like these,—
I only number sunny hours.

ENVOY.

Prince, keep your happiest memories,
Think of the shine, forget the showers,
Learn here Life's secret, if you please,—
I only number sunny hours.

Digitized by Google

OF EARLY SUMMER.

To E. B. S.

'*In the leafy month of June.*'—COLERIDGE.

WHEN full-blown morning-glories shine,
And rosebuds beat the window-pane,
And, drenched with dew, the eglantine
Is nodding in the shady lane,
When fields are green with springing grain,
When little ruffling streamlets croon—
Then Summer comes to us again
All in the leafy month of June.

Where fragrant honeysuckles twine,
The bees' monotonous refrain
With song-birds' melodies combine
To gently lull the listless brain,
Till every sated sense is fain,
Through the long dreamy afternoon,
To slumber 'mid the Summer's train
All in the leafy month of June.

Digitized by Google

When o'er the whispering groves of pine
  The West is flushed with sunset-stain,
Cool breezes bring the breath of kine
  And hay-scent from the loaded wain,
  When love-lorn nightingales complain
To glimmering stars and full fair moon,
  Love's pulses beat in every vein
All in the leafy month of June.

ENVOY.

  Queen of the Seasons, though thy reign
Dies with the roses all too soon,
  Thou wakest Love's undying strain
All in the leafy month of June.

Digitized by Google

OF SUMMER FLOWN.

To G. F. B.

'*Summer is gone on swallow's wings.*'—HOOD.

ITHIN this Autumn-garden, dear,
Where now the last fair blossoms fade,
When Summer skies were blue and clear,
Together hand in hand we strayed ;
We wandered through the cool arcade
Down grassy paths with flowers o'ergrown,—
No more we seek its welcome shade
Now those sweet Summer days have flown.

In leafy boughs, now sad and sere,
The breeze a gentle music made,
Bees buzzed, and song-birds warbled near,
The babbling fountain plashed and played ;
Then your glad voice rang through the glade,—
You whisper now in an undertone,
A spell of silence on us laid
Now those sweet Summer days have flown.

Digitized by Google

To that best morn of all the year
Can you go back with memory's aid,
When, in a sunny atmosphere,
We leaned on this stone balustrade
Beneath laburnums, downward weighed
By golden clusters fully blown?—
Say, has your heart turned renegade
Now those sweet Summer days have flown?

ENVOY.

Ah love, those vows shall still be paid,
Not sworn for happy hours alone,
And Love's behest the more obeyed
Now those sweet Summer days have flown.

Digitized by Google

OF BOYS' NAMES.

To W. E. M.

'*Sets my heart a-flame, O!*'—PRINCESS IDA.

LD memories of the Table Round
In Percival and Lancelot dwell,
Clement and Bernard bring the sound
Of anthems in the cloister-cell,
And Leonard vies with Lionel
In stately step and kingly frame,
And Kenneth speaks of field and fell,
And Ernest sets my heart a-flame.

One name can make my pulses bound,
No peer it owns, nor parallel,
By it is Vivian's sweetness drowned,
And Roland, full as organ-swell;
Though Frank may ring like silver bell,
And Cecil softer music claim,
They cannot work the miracle,—
'Tis Ernest sets my heart a-flame.

Digitized by Google

Cyril is lordly, Stephen crowned
With deathless wreaths of asphodel,
Oliver whispers peace profound,
Herbert takes arms his foes to quell,
Eustace with sheaves is laden well,
Christopher has a nobler fame,
And Michael storms the gates of Hell,
But Ernest sets my heart a-flame.

ENVOY.

My little Prince, Love's mystic spell
Lights all the letters of your name,
And you, if no one else, can tell
Why Ernest sets my heart a-flame.

Digitized by Google

OF MODERN HEROES.

To J. H.

(The barque *Ocean Queen*, bound from Padstow to Runcorn, was wrecked off Llandulas Head on November 7, 1890, in a terrific north-westerly gale. Her crew were rescued by Welsh landsmen from the neighbouring quarries, who, after repeated failures, reached the vessel in an open boat.)

SONS of gallant little Wales,
In spite of what the cynic says—
That valour lives in olden tales,
And courage in our midst decays—
No warriors famed in ancient lays,
No sires in Freedom's cause who bled,
Are worthier the poet's praise,
O heroes of Llandulas Head!

Before the wild north-western gales
A ship drives o'er your rock-bound bays,
Her crew, among the tattered sails,
Are clinging to the mast and stays;
She strikes before your very gaze,—
At once ye brave the billows dread;
No thought of danger with you weighs,
O heroes of Llandulas Head!

Digitized by Google

Though effort after effort fails
  In roaring seas that blind and daze,
At last your fearless fight avails,—
  Upon the foam your shallop sways ;
  And now a joyous shout ye raise,
The vessel's swimming deck ye tread,
  Her crew to shore your skiff conveys,
O heroes of Llandulas Head !

ENVOY.

  Worthy of Cambria's palmiest days,
Ye prove her spirit is not fled ;
  Honour your noble deed repays,
O heroes of Llandulas Head !

Digitized by Google

OF BELSHAZZAR.

To R. J. C.

'*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin.*'

ALONG the roof his laughter rolled
To see within his banquet-hall
Jehovah's silver and His gold
Borne round by heathen seneschal;
He scorned the lowly Hebrew thrall,
His worship mocked, his faith derided,
But God had mixed the cup of gall,
Had numbered—numbered—weighed—divided!

His doom was sealed, his City sold—
Its gates of brass, its ramparts tall—
Because his warnings manifold
Had failed his haughty heart to appal;
Not his to lose (a judgment small!)
The power whereon himself he prided;
Not his among the beasts to crawl,
But numbered—numbered—weighed—divided!

Digitized by Google

His frescoed gods and heroes bold
  Leered on the drunken festival,
His cuneiform inscriptions old
  Went circling in a coronal,
  But, high above them, o'er the wall
A dread mysterious Finger glided,
  And, in the hush that fell on all,
Wrote, *Numbered—numbered—weighed—divided!*

ENVOY.

  Prince, vain it is for help to call,
Thy fate thou hast thyself decided:
  This night thy kingless realm shall fall,
'Tis numbered—numbered—weighed—divided!

Digitized by Google

OF INTERCESSION.

To C. J. R.

'*In thy orisons*
Be all my sins remembered.'—HAMLET, iii. 1.

I STUMBLE o'er a rocky beach
Where tempests rage with power untold,
Eyes dim, ears deaf to human speech,
Amid my doubts and fears grown old;
With wild heart-sorrow unconsoled,
Wind-buffeted, and blind with spray,
I cry, defiant still and bold,
O, plead for me whene'er you pray!

A consummation waits for each
Beyond some distant, trackless wold,—
Whene'er my haven I would reach,
Across my path the mists have rolled;
My heart is of too stern a mould
To ask, of even you, my way,
But, since my needs are manifold,
O, plead for me whene'er you pray!

Digitized by Google

I ask no guiding light to teach
The lessons on our lives enscrolled,
No pitying tears will I beseech,
Nor purchase peace with gifts of gold,
Nor will be silenced, nor cajoled,
Nor by blind leaders led astray,
Yet, if the key of all you hold,
O, plead for me whene'er you pray !

ENVOY.

Dearest, because my heart is cold,
And proud, and hard, and slow to obey,
And by your will alone controlled,
O, plead for me whene'er you pray !

Digitized by Google

OF THE ROYAL JUBILEE EXHIBITION.

To L. A. H. W.

'*The JEM of the Jubilee.*'—PUNCH.

DOOMED to destruction is the city's pride,
Deep is our sorrow, great our perturbation;
The last farewell to everything inside
Has left us in a mood for contemplation;
The fading of the last illumination,
Seemed in our hearts a tender chord to touch;
We knew the dear old place to its foundation—
That season-ticket doesn't owe us much!

Memories like visions o'er our fancy glide:
The spacious dome, the switchback's strange sensation,
The shrieks of *Programme, catalogue or guide,*
The sundry bits of printed information
(*No sticks allowed,* and *This way to the station*),
Queer dialects, from Indian to Dutch,
Fountains and tower and motley congregation—
That season-ticket doesn't owe us much!

Digitized by Google

June's heat, November's cold have been defied ;
The Irish Section's claimed close observation
(Our favourite resort when sorely tried
By crush of crowd and noisy altercation) ;
Before the Arts we've bowed in adoration,
Of Crafts a fleeting glimpse contrived to clutch,
And Music, too, has caused us meditation—
That season-ticket doesn't owe us much !

ENVOY.

Directors, bold beyond anticipation,
Our dearest idol falls (for O, 'tis such !) ;
Still, in our grief we've just this consolation—
That season-ticket doesn't owe us much !

Digitized by Google

OF FAME'S PURSUERS.

To H. B. B.

'These that fly as a cloud.'

WE follow hard upon the chase
From daybreak till the sun is low;
We run a never-ending race,
And where it leads us none may know;
Though in our teeth the tempests blow,
We hasten on with single aim;—
In morning-mist and evening-glow
With flying foot we follow Fame!

Sometimes she halts with smiling face,
A 'witching backward glance to throw;
Then quickened is the faltering pace,
And cries of *Forward!* louder grow;
But, be her progress fast or slow,
We still press onward all the same,—
If scarce her fleeting form she show
With flying foot we follow Fame!

Digitized by Google

Where'er her footmarks we can trace
We follow straight as flies the crow ;
Many we leave in evil case,—
Some fall into the river's flow,
Some sink, o'erwhelmed by weight of woe,
Some lose the trail, some pull up lame,—
But, little heeding, on we go,
With flying foot we follow Fame !

ENVOY.

Prince, we your pity move, I trow :
What think you of the toilsome game?—
Say, shall we never catch her, though
With flying foot we follow Fame?

Digitized by Google

OF TRIFLES.

To C. A.

'*All the same in a hundred years.*'—H. S. Leigh.

SUPPOSE your exchequer is low,
And you're just going out for the day,
When your snip brings the bill that you owe,—
Then, of course, you immediately pay!
If, decked out in mashing array,
To a lady removing your hat,
You collide with a chimney-sweep gay,—
Well, you won't care a button for that!

If you fancy you're able to row,
And pull out in a boat on the bay,
When up in the air your oars go,
And you deluge yourself with the spray:—
Or cricket's your game, let us say,
And you're more than a bit of a bat,
But nobody asks you to play,—
Well, you won't care a button for that!

Digitized by Google

When you want to leave town for a blow,
And your wife's gone already away,
It's a charming thing, surely, to know
That her mother is coming to stay !—
If you're smoking a colouring clay,
And you thoughtlessly sit on the cat,
And the pipe comes to grief in the fray,—
Well, you won't care a button for that !

ENVOY.

Fellow-mortal, take comfort, I pray,
If these 'trifles' just knock you down flat ;
Let phlegmatic ones mock as they may,—
Well, you won't care a button for that !

Digitized by Google

OF THE LAND OF LOVE.

To C. C. B.

'*Echoes of all music passed away.*'—CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

I LIVE in the light of fancies fled,
Of days and dreams gone by;
My heart is linked to passions dead
By an eternal tie;
Fond memories live, and triumph high
Despite oblivion fell,
All Time and Change and Death defy,
And nothing breaks the spell.

My soul, through sullen clouds o'erhead,
The love-light can descry
Where, by sweet recollections fed,
My spirit loves to lie;
The happiness can never die
Of days remembered well,
Old Love breathes soft as Summer sigh,
And nothing breaks the spell.

Digitized by Google

Present to banish doubt and dread,
That Land of Love seems nigh,
My thoughts, with light and airy tread,
Through the dim distance fly;
What if, a desert drear and dry,
The Present's sand-wastes swell?
The old Love answers to my cry,
And nothing breaks the spell.

ENVOY.

Dear, since that last good-bye was said,
The dead Past where I dwell
Has ever been Love's daily bread,
And nothing breaks the spell.

Digitized by Google

OF LOVE'S SUFFICIENCY.

To E. S.

'*Love is, and was, my Lord and King.*'—In Memoriam.

CEASE your suggestions, I pray,
(I have had more than my share !),
Though my monotonous lay
Drives your kind soul to despair ;
One leaf of laurel I wear,
One song is all that I sing,
Yet once again hear me swear,
Love is my Lord and my King !

Single my subject, you say,
Loftier flights I must dare,
Tastes of the public obey,
Feed with diversified fare,
Thus for Parnassus prepare,
Fly to its peak on strong wing :—
But I don't want to get there,—
Love is my Lord and my King !

Digitized by Google

Wisdom, no doubt, you display,
Still I am deaf to your prayer,
Little your arguments weigh,
Naught for your counsels I care;
Leave me on this lowest stair
(Flying's a dangerous thing),
I am content to declare
Love is my Lord and my King!

ENVOY.

Critic, I bid you forbear;
I am a lute with one string,
Voiceless for aught but this air,—
Love is my Lord and my King!

Digitized by Google

OF SEPARATION.

To H. M.

'Poppies at sundown 'mid the wheat-ears tall.'

IN the fields of wheat there were poppies blowing;
I plucked the blossoms left and right,
In the evening hush, when the West was glowing,
With sunset-colours richly dight,
And I wished that the flame-touched flowers could smite
My soul with a sleep wherein it should lie
Till a new day dawned, and put to flight
The night of the day when we said good-bye.

So smooth the stream of my Love was flowing,
But Fate fell on me with crushing might,
And I must remain while you were going,
For ah, 'tis useless with Fate to fight;
I watched you pass out of sound and sight
As the purple fades in the darkening sky,
But you haunted my dreams with your presence bright,
The night of the day when we said good-bye.

Digitized by Google

And this was my reaping, after sowing
In passionate hope of a harvest white !—
I lost you for ever, scarcely knowing
If you guessed my love in its depth and height :
It may be you have forgotten quite
How we stood face to face with a parting sigh,
But I swore to remember your hand-clasp tight,
The night of the day when we said good-bye.

ENVOY.

Love, you live in the glad sunlight,
With never a sorrow to dim your eye,
But for me there is nothing but darksome night,—
The night of the day when we said good-bye.

Digitized by Google

OF SLIGHTED LOVE.

To F. N.

'My love was stronger and fiercer than theirs.'—GEORGE MOORE.

MY heart hides deep its tale of woe,
Ah, sweet, you do not guess its pain,
Its bitterness it will not show,
Nor of its piteous plight complain ;
Your lovers in a favoured train
On every side my access bar,
But, though I seek your smile in vain,
My slighted love is fiercer far !

What would it profit you to know
The tides of Love that surge amain,—
How wildly strong and deep they flow,
And how I beat them back again ?
O'er rival hearts serene you reign,
Your calm content I would not mar,
Yet, if my passion I restrain,
My slighted love is fiercer far !

Digitized by Google

I watch your lovers come and go
With aching breast and tortured brain ;
On suppliant lips a smile you throw,
To take the proffered hand you deign,
And my poor heart, of comfort fain,
That sees but cannot reach its star,
Sings to itself this sad refrain,—
My slighted love is fiercer far !

ENVOY.

Soul of my soul, my joy, my bane,
You, from the exile where you are,
Shall find some day, when theirs shall wane,
My slighted love was fiercer far !

Digitized by Google

A SEASON OF SILENCE.

VILLANELLE.

HE wintry world is wrapped in sleep,
The red sun hides behind his shroud,
While over all the snows lie deep.

No song-birds sing, no runnels leap,
No voice of Nature cries aloud,—
The wintry world is wrapped in sleep.

Half-buried on the upland steep
The herd stands huddled in a crowd,
While over all the snows lie deep.

The moon her vigil loves to keep
When, in its garb of mist and cloud,
The wintry world lies wrapped in sleep.

Digitized by Google

From frosty skies the planets peep,
  Each orb with double light endowed,
While over all the snows lie deep.

The laden branches seem to weep,
  Beneath their icy burden bowed,—
The wintry world is wrapped in sleep,
While over all the snows lie deep.

Digitized by Google

ST. VALENTINE'S EVE.

RONDEL.

TO-NIGHT his vigil I am keeping,—
The Saint that holds the promised sign;
My harvest whitens, rain or shine,
To-morrow brings the dubious reaping.

Sometimes I doubt, and fall a-weeping,—
What if a bitter fate be mine?
To-night his vigil I am keeping,—
The Saint that holds the promised sign.

Then hope returns; my pulse is leaping,
My brain is whirling as with wine,—
With morning comes Saint Valentine:
Ah, love, while you are calmly sleeping,
To-night his vigil I am keeping!

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

RONDEAUS.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

WHEN SUMMER DIES.

WHEN Summer dies, and harvest fields are bare,
And chill at sun-down grows the Autumnal air,
Heedful of darkening days and waning light,
The cuckoo calls farewell and takes his flight,
And swallows to a Southern shore repair.

At eve, a red moon rises, full and fair,
While all the Western sky is yet aflare
With sunset colours fading into night
When Summer dies.

In garden-plots the last tall sun-flowers stare
At stocks and dahlias lying withered there ;
Gone are the nodding roses red and white,
The stately lilies and carnations bright,
And wind-tossed elms a look foreboding wear
When Summer dies.

Digitized by Google

THE BELLS OF YULE.

THE bells of Yule ring out o'er hill and dale,
Their notes are borne to us upon the gale,
When, homeward going in the evening-time,
We see the moon above the village climb,
And through the frosty sky the white clouds sail.

When round the cottage-roof the night-winds wail,
And snow-wreaths lie deep-drifted in the vale,
We hear them carol forth their song sublime,—
The bells of Yule.

They peal at daybreak, when the dawn is pale,
To tell the silent world their gladsome tale;
And as we listen to their joyous chime
Up to our lattice floats the sweet old rhyme,—
We hear the herald-angels sing, and hail
The bells of Yule.

Digitized by Google

THE MIDNIGHT BELLS.

THE midnight bells their muttered prayers repeat
Like priests that kneel beside a winding-sheet,
With mournful voices, hushed in boding fear,
They toll the requiem of the Passing Year,
And mark the solemn moments, flying fleet.

They sing a *Dona Pacem*, faint and sweet,
While the last pulses of the Old Year beat,
And silent watchers shudder as they hear
The midnight bells.

But, hark! the hour is sped, the tale complete,
And on the threshold stand expectant feet;
With wildest clamour, full of hope and cheer,
Melodious notes come ringing loud and clear,
For gaily peal, the glad New Year to greet,
The midnight bells.

Digitized by Google

SECRET LOVE.

DID I but dare this silence break,
And at thy feet confession make,
My faithful heart would cast away
The bitter-sweet of mute delay,
And cease with its hidden wound to ache.

Fain would I tell how, for thy sake,
I from Love's Dreamland fear to awake,
And still Love's willing prisoner stay,
Did I but dare!

Perchance thou wouldst compassion take,
And lighter fetters o'er me shake;
I might come forth from twilight gray
To the noontide glow of Summer day,—
Might sail with thee Love's sunlit Lake,
Did I but dare!

Digitized by Google

'TIS WHERE YOU ARE.

IS where you are I fain would be;
Between us rolls a sullen sea,
But, love, though you are far away,
I bridge in dreams by night and day
The gulf that severs you from me.

'Tis not where Southern winds blow free
O'er sunny wave and flower and tree
That happiness with me will stay,—
'Tis where you are!

Dull skies are yours, a barren lea,
A wintry clime whence song-birds flee;
Still to be there I long and pray,
My heart abides not in this bay,
This fairyland of mirth and glee,—
'Tis where you are!

Digitized by Google

YOUR HAND IN MINE.

OUR hand in mine, I rise and slay
The doubts and cares that gather aye
Around me; at your touch I grow
Strong in your wondrous strength, and throw
Defiance to their grim array.

Without my Paradise they stay,
Their hostile banners bar the way,
But in between its gates I go,—
Your hand in mine!

Ah, love, when dawns my darksome day,
And sorrow o'er my heart holds sway,
Whene'er I fear to face the foe,
And Faith's fair lamp is flickering low,
Lean to my longing lips, and lay
Your hand in mine!

Digitized by Google

ON MAY-DAY MORN.

ON May-day morn the skies were fair,
The birds were singing everywhere,
And, as I wandered gaily through
The meadows where the daisies grew,
I heard the cuckoo calling there.

Then cried I to the soft spring-air
A message to my love to bear,—
I could not help but think of you
On May-day morn!

Love, did you hear the winds declare
That you were all my joy and care?
That, like the heavens of cloudless blue,
My love was deep, undimmed and true?
One thought for me, dear, did you spare
On May-day morn?

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LYRICS AND SONGS.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THROUGH THE GATES OF SLEEP.

A tale of a little monarch who woke from a dream one day,
And had changed his dismal palace for a Palace where boys could play.

I.

HE was lord of a million subjects, this little brown
Indian Prince;
He was born their sovran master, and had ruled
them ever since:

II.

But little he knew of his people, and lightly esteemed his
crown,—
As the gilded arms of a hero, so his greatness weighed
him down.

III.

His days were passed in the presence of counsellors sedate,
In dreary preparation for the coming cares of state.

Digitized by Google

IV.

His spirits were light and buoyant with the vigour of fourteen years,
And for hours he had to hearken to their warnings and doubts and fears!

V.

He was healthy and strong and active, robust in mind as in limb,
But he never had a playmate, and play meant nothing to him.

VI.

Sometimes he leaned from his window, and heard in the cool of the day
The distant voices of children in his city far away;

VII.

And turned to his grave companions to know what the noise was about,—
There was naught in *his* daily duties to make him sing and shout!

Digitized by Google

VIII.

And they answered, in stilted language which he scarce could understand,
That mirth was unbecoming in the Prince of all the land;

IX.

He might walk in the palace-garden, with a sage on either side,
Or, decked with regal splendour, in a chariot of state could ride.

X.

Yet he felt there was something wanting to tinge his life with joy,—
He lived and spoke like a statesman, but he felt and thought like a boy:

XI.

Till his sunny temper darkened, and the bright smile that he had,
And his looks were often sullen, and his words were peevish and sad.

Digitized by Google

XII.

It could only be human instinct that caused him this discontent,—
He had lived so long without pleasure that he knew not what it meant,

XIII.

And when the sorrowing graybeards asked why he fretted so,
And how they could make him happy, he answered he did not know.

XIV.

He knew not that all his powers were given for his delight,
Nor guessed why his limbs were sturdy, and his eye was keen and bright,

XV.

For when he watched the freedom of the birds that sing and fly,
He knew he was filled with envy, but he had to wonder why!

Digitized by Google

XVI.

And, fettered and chained within him, the joy of his being and age
Was beating its wings like a song-bird against the bars of its cage.

* * * * *

XVII.

One night he went to his chamber with a feeling of deep dismay,—
'Twas the eve of the great reception that he held on his natal day;

XVIII.

All through the hours of the morrow he knew he would have to stand,
While a thousand faithful chieftains bent downward to kiss his hand;

XIX.

And he presently passed to slumber, still pondering what to say,
And a vision came to cheer him,—a vision of sport and play.

Digitized by Google

XX.

He dreamed he stood by a River that flowed through a flowery Land,
And boys like himself were thronging its shores in a happy band:

XXI.

He saw them fish in its waters, and row o'er its rippling tide,
And their brown arms gleamed in the sunshine as they swam from side to side:

XXII.

In the meadows that spread beside it they merrily raced and played,
Or climbed into leafy branches, or feasted on fruit in the shade:

XXIII.

There were boys of other nations, of whom he had never known,
Whose forms were not more graceful though whiter than his own:

Digitized by Google

XXIV.

With wind-blown hair they galloped on the backs of flying steeds,
Or chased their balls with shouting all over the grassy meads :

XXV.

Their paper-kites went soaring up into the golden air,
And they fondled their pets in the daisies that flourished everywhere.

XXVI.

And the pulse of the little dreamer with an unknown gladness beat,
And he felt that to play among them would make life strangely sweet ;

XXVII.

So he cried to the great Gautama, for he thought he had sent the dream,
To let him join in the pleasures of the boys by the shining Stream :

Digitized by Google

XXVIII.

And, Whoever sent the vision, He answered the cry of pain,
For the young Prince never wakened to a world of care again.

XXIX.

They came on his birthday-morning, and he lay with wondrous grace
In the sleep that knows no waking, with a radiant look on his face.

XXX.

His chieftains sobbed beside him, and he smiled upon every guest,
But the little red lips were silent, the little brown limbs at rest.

A tale of a little monarch who died in a dream one day,
And left his city of sorrows for a City where boys can play.

Digitized by Google

SHADOWS OF FATE.

IN the early morning, when the bees were softly humming
Round beds of mignonette,
Down the shady garden-paths I heard your footstep coming,
Where the dew was wet.

Every flushing flower bowed its graceful head to greet you,
Decked with pearly sheen;
All among the rich red roses forth I went to meet you,—
You, the roses' queen!

In my hand you placed a blossom, but too late its gleaning,—
Leaves and petals fell:
Dear lost love, I little knew the hapless omen's meaning,—
Now I know too well!

Digitized by Google

WHISPERED AT SUNSET.

THE golden corn was flooded
With light of rosy hue,—
A sea of yellow, studded
With isles of red and blue;
The song-birds hither winging
Set all the thicket ringing,
For every one was singing
A welcome, love, to you.

A beam fell on the poppies
And touched them all with flame,
And far within the coppice
A blackbird called your name;
The drowsy brook was sighing,
The sunset breeze replying,
The summer day was dying
As through the wood you came.

Digitized by Google

Now up above the beeches
The east grows pearly-gray,
Like shadowy sea-green reaches
In a quiet land-locked bay ;
Ah, pale moon, that appearest
Where heaven's arch is clearest,
The blue eyes of my dearest
Send forth a fairer ray !

With these white stars above me
I kiss your upturned cheek ;
My darling, say you love me,
Now, ere my heart grows weak !
Ah, love, your sweet face flushes,
You tell it to the thrushes,
While all the tall bulrushes
Bend down to hear you speak !

Digitized by Google

OUTWARD BOUND.

THE gloomy clouds are flying fast,
The shifting breezes bend the mast
As out to sea we're sailing;
November's sky above us spreads,
The gulls are flitting o'er our heads,
The swimming deck each traveller treads,
Or clings to spar and railing.

Borne onward by the chilly wind,
We're leaving England far behind,
And we shall think hereafter
Of that intent and loving gaze
Which, through the shimmering mist of haze,
We cast upon her,—when dark days
Have turned to grief our laughter.

Digitized by Google

We reck not of the scudding sleet,
Nor of the ocean 'neath our feet,—
  Our heart on home is dwelling ;
And thus we take a last farewell
Of that bright land whose wondrous spell
Shall wreathe us round where'er we dwell,
  The power of care dispelling.

In the dim distance fades the scene,
Engulphed the last faint trace has been,
  The twilight of November
Has shrouded all, and 'tis in vain
We gaze across the leaden main ;
But we have caught, through fog and rain,
  A glimpse we shall remember.

Digitized by Google

MY SONG OF SONGS.

IN day-dreams and night-visions
I ever hear your name,
The wind that heralds the morning
Is full of its glad acclaim ;
It is breathed in softer accents
When the twilight-breezes moan,
And Nature tunes her voices
To your dear name alone :
When I catch through the sunset-silence
The sob of an ebbing sea,
Or when full tides croon to the full fair moon,
It comes alike to me.

I hear it carolled gaily
By countless happy birds,
And the brook, as it hastens onwards,
Can prattle no other words ;

Digitized by Google

It is sung like a dreamy lullaby
In the tops of the swaying trees,
'Tis the burden of bells at vespers,
And the summer song of the bees ;
It comes as a gentle whisper
In the patter of falling rain,
And its sound is borne from the fields of corn
In the rustle of golden grain.

It thrills with divinest music
In the deep-toned organ-swell,
And the far-off voices of children
Are touched with its wondrous spell ;
In the early, early morning
Its strange mysterious chime
Rings through the fading starlight
In the throbbing pulse of Time :
In day-dreams and night-visions
It fans my love to flame,
For, low and sweet, in my own heart's beat
I ever hear your name !

Digitized by Google

A DISTANT LOVE.

H my heart is far away,
Away in climates clear;
In this land it cannot stay,
This land so dull and drear;
Far beyond a tropic sea,
Where all is bright and gay and fair,
Fast and free it flies from me,—
My heart is dwelling there!

There, beyond the reach of storm,
My choicest treasures lie;
To the countries sweet and warm
My longings ever fly;
Where is soft abiding calm
And flower-shed incense in the air,
Songsters' psalm and feathery palm,—
My thoughts are dwelling there!

Digitized by Google

Little reck I of the pain,
  The grief, the woe of Life,--
I forget its constant strain,
  Its sorrows, ills and strife;
In a spot where fear comes not,
  Away from dread and carking care,
All but peace and joy forgot,—
  My mind is dwelling there!

Yet these beauties are to me
  Of very little worth,—
Many lands beyond the sea
  Are full of light and mirth;
Not the power of bird, or flower,
  Or sunny clime, or perfume rare,
Could enchant me for an hour
  Unless my Love were there!

Digitized by Google

GONE TO SLEEP.

DEAR little one, beside your bed
I sat, your fingers holding;
Night's curtain closed about your head,
Your listless form enfolding:
You whispered low, then ceased to speak,
And, while your words I pondered,
Your lashes drooped along your cheek,—
To Dreamland off you wandered.

The daylight died from off the pane,
Without, the dusk was falling,
And in the twilight down the lane
I heard a night-thrush calling;
But in those realms where you had gone,
The country of your dreaming,
Perchance a bright sun o'er you shone,
Or a silver moon was beaming.

Digitized by Google

The flutter in your breath I caught,
  Your parted lips were smiling,—
I longed to know what happy thought
  Your fancy was beguiling;
Strange that, although I held your hand,
  Your joys I could not number,
Nor follow you into that land,—
  The golden Land of Slumber!

Here evening shadows gathered dim,
  But thither comes no gloaming;
Though here you lay with weary limb,
  There you were gaily roaming:
My darling, I could only sit
  A patient vigil keeping,
Rejoiced your visions should be sweet
  While you were softly sleeping.

Digitized by Google

SUMMONED TO DREAMLAND.

MOTHER darling, come and sit
Beside me as I rest,
I don't want any candles lit—
I like the twilight best ;
Your head above my own is bent,
And, while you hold my hand,
I'll try to tell you how I went
Last night to Fairyland.

Just as I'd fallen fast asleep
A ray of moonlight came,
Then out I saw a fairy creep,
And heard him call my name ;
So, leaping up, I went with him,
And on that silvery beam
We sailed away to a forest dim,
O'er mountain, field and stream.

Digitized by Google

He brought me to a grassy glade,—
The moon shone bright as day,
And there a band of fairies played,
Such tiny elves were they!
They danced in merry tripping troops
Around the mushrooms tall,
Or laughed and sang in cheery groups,—
It was a fairies' ball!

He was the very smallest one,
The elf who came for me,
He led me forth to join the fun,
And bade me welcome be:
He brought me wings just like his own,
We danced together there,
And then we wandered off alone
In the cool midnight air.

His little arm to me he gave,—
We saw such wondrous sights!
And soon we reached the elfin-cave,
The home of all the sprites,

Digitized by Google

And there the table spread we found,
  And down we sat to dine ;
A million wee folk gathered round,
  But none so fair as mine !

I asked that smallest fairy's name,—
  I don't know what he said,
For suddenly the moonbeam came
  To take me back to bed ;
He cried good-bye at morning's brink,
  And kissed me on my brow ;
He said he'd come again,—I think
  He's waiting for me now !

'Tis pleasant, mother dear, to lie
  And hear you softly sing,
But O, you ought to see me fly
  About that fairy-ring !
Look ! there's the moonbeam on the wall
  (Don't hold my hand so tight !),
I hear that smallest fairy call,—
  Just kiss your boy good-night !

Digitized by Google

LOVE'S SILENCE.

'*Thou wouldst not care to look for thoughts of mine.*'—
LOVE-LETTERS OF A VIOLINIST.

THE joy of that fresh frosty morning,
The dreamy repose in the air,
When, quiet and still, at the foot of the hill,
The village lay smiling and fair!
In the woods, where the silence was deeper,
No murmur arose from the streams,
And the sea was as calm as a sleeper—
Sleeping untroubled by dreams.

And I led you, dear love, up the hill-side,
And oft for a moment we stood
And watched shadows fly o'er the fields and the sky
And the sea in its somnolent mood;
And I knew that your spirit was calmer
Than Nature herself, that bright day,
But you stirred me to passion, my charmer—
Charming my senses away.

Digitized by Google

True, dearest, your hand I was holding,
But coldly it lay within mine,
And on my heart fell such a strange mystic spell
That I dared not give token or sign !
Ah, would you had looked at your leader,
And seen in his eyes his love burn ;
You might have been kind to the pleader—
Pleading for love in return !

Digitized by Google

HEART'S HOPE.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO)

HEN I a dewy plot have found,
A lawn with lilies overspread,
Where honeysuckle-blooms abound
And jasmine swings o'erhead,
And sheaves of full-blown flowers appear
At every season of the year,—
I cry, Such be the path, my dear,
Wherein thy feet shall tread !

When I a bosom brave have known,
A noble and devoted breast
That bows to Honour's voice alone,
Intent on lofty quest,
A bosom true to Love alway,
Which Love makes ever blithe and gay,—
On such a pillow, dear, I pray
Thy weary head may rest !

Digitized by Google

When I have dreamed a love-dream sweet,
  Fragrant as roses and as fair,
Which day by day attends my feet,
  God's gift to banish care,
I feel its blessèd power to bind
Soul unto soul and mind to mind ;—
May thy heart such a shelter find,
  And nestle softly there !

Digitized by Google

TOLD IN THE TWILIGHT.

H let us go home in the gloaming,
Ere the night-cloud creeps over the sky;
Too long, love, our feet have been roaming,
And the day is beginning to die:
I would ask, as we pass through the heather,
With our face to the faint-flushing west,
Shall we make our life-journey together?—
Will you heed my heart's longing request?

Nay, dearest, no need for replying,—
In your sweet eyes the answer shines clear!
All day my strong love has been crying,
And I felt I must tell it you here:
Such hope in my breast had arisen,
As homeward we turned in the glow,
That my love burst the bars of its prison,—
Though you knew it, I think, long ago!

Digitized by Google

See, the clouds float before us like islands
On the bosom of some sapphire sea,
The night-winds have sunk into silence,—
Take my hand, and come close, love, to me:
Ah, my darling, the torrent is foaming,—
Our confidence ebbs with the day;
We are all going home in the gloaming,—
God grant that we miss not the way!

Digitized by Google

SUNSHINE.

HŒBUS rides o'er the distant hill,
His earliest beams with glory fill
The eastern heaven, and faintly flushing
Gild the gray haze that lingers still.

The night before his chariot flies,
The shadows, driven through the skies,
Vanish like ghosts in the crystal morning,
And melt beneath his lustrous eyes.

Onward he comes in royal state,
Bright-tinted clouds upon him wait,
Long level bars of radiant colour
Line the approaches to his gate.

Anon he shines with fiercer ray,
And marks the noon-tide of the day,—
With glowing heat and meridian splendour
Kisses earth's dewy tears away.

Digitized by Google

His steeds recede ; their journey's end
Is near ; the weary wheels descend
  The western sky, and ocean gladly
Receives the universal friend.

And sinking in the wave, behold,
Imperial clouds his form enfold,—
  Crimson that deepens into purple,
And orange brightening into gold.

He disappears, and twilight dim
Melodious grows with Nature's hymn,—
  A farewell psalm as night approaches,
And throws o'er all her mantle grim.

* * * * *

Mine be the course that beameth so,
The gifts that bless where'er they go,
  The genial life that lightens all things
And leaves a golden afterglow !

Mine be it, as my race I run,
To leave no kindly deed undone,—
  Shine like the glorious Apollo,
And be to all the world a sun !

Digitized by Google

SERENADE.

To T. J. L.

LEAN from your lattice, lady mine, and hearken,
Though in the silent woods no song-birds sing,—
The stillness deepens as the shadows darken,
The sleeping waves and winds no message bring,
But my devotion knows no slumbering:
List while I carol in the waning light
Good-night, good-night!

Fade all the fringes of the sunset-glory,
Pale is yon moon that climbs the eastern sky;
The day is dead, and ended is its story,
But, lady mine, my love can never die,—
Look once upon your lover lingering nigh,
Smile through your clustering roses red and white:
Good-night, good-night!

Digitized by Google

Look, dearest, look, and see the lurid splendour
Of yon red planet burning in the west,—
As that fierce star shines through the twilight tender
So flames the fire of Love within my breast,
So dreams of thee shall glorify my rest:
Sleep, lady, sleep till morning's beams be bright:
Good-night, good-night!

Digitized by Google

THE BOY IN THE BOAT.

(FOR A PAINTING BY W. H. BARTLETT.)

WHERE sapphire waters in their summer splendour
Reflect the clouds that idly float,
Stripped for the plunge, the boy of figure slender
Stands in the open boat.

Vaguely I see his comrades round him swimming,—
To him is given my gaze alone
As he leans o'er them, innocently dimming
Their beauty by his own.

His silent sunburnt face is downward drooping,
He rests his hands upon his knees;
The careless posture of that lithe form stooping
Is full of grace and ease.

Digitized by Google

The sunny afternoon, so gaily beaming
Across the opalescent sea,
The distant ship, the far-off headland gleaming,
Are not so fair as he.

O, what a charm is thine, sweet youthful swimmer,
Thy praise I sing with feeble note,
As thou art standing in the sunlight's shimmer,
O, bright boy in the boat!

Digitized by Google

AT LOW TIDE.

BRIGHT the yellow sands were glowing
Underneath a roseate sky,
Down to where the tide was flowing,—
Crooning to the reaches dry
With a dreamy lullaby.

Creeping on with sweet persistence
Foamy ripples fringed the sand ;
Stretching into hazy distance
All the sea was calm and bland,
While the sun set o'er the land.

In a hush of softened splendour
Died the clear December day ;
Waning light fell, warm and tender,
On the headland far away,
And the quiet, glassy bay.

Digitized by Google

Fleecy cloudlets, seaward drifting,
By the western glow were kissed;
Lights reflected, ever shifting,
Wove above the wave a mist
Green and gold and amethyst.

Long I watched the daylight dying,
Heard the dim woods gently moan,
And the wash of the tide replying
In a listless monotone,—
Nature and myself alone.

But, where snow-white gulls were wheeling,
There you stood upon the strand;
Then, as soon as I was kneeling,
Holding fast your little hand,
Faded sea and sky and land!

Sunset-fires I saw no longer,
I beheld a new sun rise,—
Love, than Life and Nature stronger . . .
Dearest, my world ever lies
In the smile of your sweet eyes!

Digitized by Google

TO MEMORY DEAR.

THEY sit before me in their wonted places,
This single sober hour of all their day,
I scan their fifty fresh familiar faces,
And frown on lips that laugh or eyes that stray ;
Behind a mask and attitude imperious
I hide a twinge of pain that naught can cheer,—
Something I miss in this assembly serious—
The one that charmed me chiefly is not here.

Sometimes old memories wake again and find me
Deeply engrossed with other forms instead,
And, clouding all my calm content, remind me
How once I used to watch a fair round head
Until—perhaps unconsciously invited—
A merry glance would pierce me through and through,
And, though I dared not show myself delighted,
I had no heart to scowl on eyes so blue !

Digitized by Google

These droop their heads abashed, these wonder greatly
To find my musing gaze upon them fixed,
And, one and all, they meet my look sedately,
Their deference with some confusion mixed;
They sit, though pleasure-loving and light-hearted,
With quiet limbs and hands that never play,—
The lips that dared to smile have now departed,
The restless little feet have passed away.

I like their sturdy forms, and bright complexions
Radiant with health and browned by wind and sun,
They hold a lofty place in my affections,
For strangely dear to me is every one;
But often, as their history I ponder,
Dream of their past, their future think upon,
To a dear distant face my thoughts will wander,—
The little boy I used to love is gone!

Digitized by Google

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHT.

Annus octoginta-octo mirabilis.

EIGHTY-SEVEN ! and the good old sphere
Goes spinning off for another lap,
And we eye with suspicion the youthful year,
For a bad name clings to the poor little chap :
But our next Revolution's a long time hence,
And Spanish Armadas are out of date,
So it isn't from *these* that we want defence
In this wonderful year of Eighty-eight !

About possible evils, unseen, unknown,
We do not intend to trouble our head,—
It's enough to remember those alone
That harassed our life in the year that's dead :
The meddlesome bobby, the humorous beak,
The political turncoat, the ruinous rate,
The weapons that bend, and the ships that leak,—
O, save us from *these* in Eighty-eight !

Digitized by Google

The fool in the pit that howls out 'Fire!'
The lady that loves to be half-undressed,
The virtuous Punch and Judy liar,—
We devoutly pray *them* to give us a rest!
Society pets who take the stage,
Worn-out R.A.'s with their pictures 'great,'
Boulanger's March that is all the rage,—
We could do without *them* in Eighty-eight!

Horses whose running is out and in,
Makers' amateurs, peds. who rope,
Veiled professionals, protests thin,—
We've had sufficient of *these*, we hope!
But it's no good writing a column more,—
We can only make up our minds to wait,
And see what there is for us in store
In this wonderful year of Eighty-eight!

Digitized by Google

BY THE SEA.

I SAT by the ocean, rolling its waters wide and free,—
Like the sound of a death-bell tolling seemed its restless moan to me;
I hated the sea below me and its gentle tidal strain,
For it only served to throw me back into the past again;
For the music went on falling
And rising o'er the bay,
My dear lost love recalling
Whom Death had borne away!

I strove my grief to bury, but how could I forget
That voice so blithe and merry—those eyes, my amulet?
My heart felt lone and weary, and longed with purpose dim
To be far from this earth so dreary, in the land of harp and hymn;
And the music went on falling
And rising o'er the sea,
And the summons of Death appalling
No terror had for me.

Digitized by Google

Then the dirge of the full tides rushing was changed to a cheerful air,
And Hope like a fount came gushing, and chased away Despair,
And whispered that soon and for ever would vanish the cloudy night,
When we, whom naught could sever, were joined in the halls of light:

And the music went on falling
And rising through the air,
Like the voice of an angel calling
My soul to our meeting there!

Digitized by Google

IN WHITE ARRAY.

THROUGH green lanes leading to the sea,
All golden in the sunbeams bright,
We drove this morning, I and he—
My little boy in white.

My proud eyes scanned him where he sat
Nestling among the cushions blue,
From the white band that bound his hat
To each white little shoe.

His fair arms clasped his white-clad knees,
A broad white ribbon at his throat,
His white shirt fluttered in the breeze
Beneath his loose white coat:

But there was peach-bloom on his face,
And soft brown hair about his head,
Two blue eyes gleamed with heaven's own grace,
Two lips were cherry-red.

Digitized by Google

And gazing on my darling then,
Fresh as a flower, as free from care,
I deemed my little lad of ten
Had never looked so fair!

But in his shadowy room to-night
More beauteous was my boy than this,—
A bare-legged phantom all in white
He claimed his evening kiss.

He knelt and prayed beside my knee,
He put his little hands in mine;—
Whiter in twilight-dusk was he
Than in the morning-shine.

Dear Lord! preserve him innocent,
His soul's fair robe unstained by ill,
And give him, when Life's Day is spent,
A whiter garment still!

Digitized by Google

IN CLOUDLAND.

THAT day we climbed the steep hill-side—
To me so old, to you so new—
And gazed upon the landscape wide,
While wild winds blew,

Did you love me as I loved you?—
I longed to ask, yet dared not speak;
Your eye was fixed upon the view,
And flushed your cheek.

O, as we stood on that chill peak,
The world a little while forgot,
I hid my love with phrases weak,
I told you not!

While still we lingered on the spot
The pale moon shone with wintry light,
The sun's last beams on tree and cot
Were glinting bright.

Digitized by Google

Can you recall the wondrous sight
  Of rolling clouds beneath our feet,
The misty valley gleaming white,
    The heather sweet?

Ah, dearest, though you never knew,
  My heart was yours; it cried to me
That on the mountain-top with you
    'Twas good to be.

And even now, when far away,
  The heather's bells, the bleak wind's kiss,
The whirr of grouse, bring back the day—
    Revive its bliss.

Barehead upon the hill-top high
  I hold once more your hand of ice,
And feel that thus to live and die
    Were Paradise!

Digitized by Google

LOVE'S SUMMER.

THE summer, the summer!—ah, yes, 'tis with me still,—
The blue sea basking in the heat, the sun-glint on the hill,
The cool dark woods all musical with melody of birds,
The trustful glance of upturned eyes, and Love's sweet whispered words;
The old joy wells up in my breast, too deep to understand,—
Once more 'tis golden summer, and my darling holds my hand!

My darling, my darling!—ah, love, I loved you so!
And most of all when on your brow the death-dew gathered slow,
When, kneeling by your bed-side, I saw you sink to sleep,
When your white soul drifted into heaven, and I was left to weep;

Digitized by Google

As I stooped to kiss your dear dead eyes my heart went
out from me,
And it lies with you, my darling, in the grave-yard by the
sea !

The grave-yard, the grave-yard !—all through the silent
night
The moon smiles down upon it with shafts of tender light,
The dawn lays rosy fingers upon the fair head-stone,
And the tide croons sleepy dirges in a quiet undertone ;
Ah, little cross, you haunt my dreams, and check each
restless sigh,—
I shall go through that dear grave-yard to Love's Summer
by-and-by !

Digitized by Google

THREE PHASES.

AT morn I see the golden sun
Mount up the eastern sky,
The night is o'er, the day begun,
And glory gleams on high;
O'er hill and dale, o'er vale and steep,
O'er cliff and cloud his streamers sweep,
He wakes the weary world from sleep,
He bids the shadows fly.

I see the glowing sphere at noon
Blaze with a brilliance bright,
The birds pour forth their merry tune,
And Nature lies in light;
The mighty monarch's noontide ray
Lends life and gladness to the day,
He hastens on his wonted way,
And decks the world with white.

Digitized by Google

At eve I see the fiery ball
Sink in the shining west,
Long lines of purple flush, and fall
On clouds with colour dressed ;
He lingers still, one ray to cast
Upon the day so nearly past,—
This evening gleam, his best, his last,
Is lovelier than the rest.

I watched a dear departed friend
Shine bright in childhood blest ;
And where its streams with manhood blend
His beauties stood confessed ;
But when Death bore him to the grave
His life surpassing glory gave,
His sun shone forth most bright, most brave,
When sinking in the west.

Digitized by Google

NOT FORGOTTEN.

AH, love, those summer days
I never can forget,
Their gladness with me ever stays,
Deep in my memory set.

How oft, dear love, we strayed
Along the river's bank,
Our happy hearts alone obeyed,
And draughts of pleasure drank!

How well I recollect
The meadows green and gay,
The velvet sward with daisies decked,
The pleasant winding way!

All through the winter drear
I dreamed of these sweet things,
And summer once again is here,—
But oh, no joy it brings!

Digitized by Google

I cannot bear alone
To walk beside the stream,—
There's sorrow in the blackbird's tone,
There's grief in every gleam.

Among the flowerets now
Thy form I do not see,
And I may come to thee, but thou
Wilt not return to me !

Digitized by Google

AT DAYBREAK.

WEARY of tossing on a sleepless bed,
I rose, and softly passed
Out of my darkened room, with aching head
And spirit overcast.

Through the cool corridor the morning light
Was stealing, pearly-gray ;
A gentle rain was falling while the night
Was growing into day.

The streaming casement glimmered in the gloom,
A clock below struck four,
As, once again returning to my room,
I paused without your door,

And heard your breathing, regular and deep,
Untouched by care or pain,
And knew that you were lying there asleep,
Heedless of dawn and rain.

Digitized by Google

And so, because my love is strong and true,
I prayed upon the spot
That God would shower His blessings upon you,
E'en when you knew it not.

Then, cheered and strengthened, to my couch I crept,
Remembering you were nigh,
And whispered your dear name, and sweetly slept
Until the sun was high.

Digitized by Google

A SONG OF APRIL.

NDER the soft April sky,
Down where the streamlet is flowing,
Meadows are gay with a golden array,—
Myriads of daffodils blowing;
Soaring and singing all day
The lark carols loudly on high,
And the wild-rabbit pushes his way through the bushes
Under the soft April sky.

Now the spring-breeze is abroad
Whispering low in the sedges,
Till the long ripples shake o'er the length of the lake,
And the hawthorn-spray nods in the hedges;
The slumbering squirrel awakes,
And the rooks to each other have cawed,
Loudly protesting 'tis time to be nesting,
Now the spring-breeze is abroad.

Digitized by Google

Fresh with the dew and the showers
  Wide-spreading chestnuts are budding,
The yellow weeds bow o'er the path of the plough
  In the fields that the sunshine is flooding ;
Down at the tall elm-trees' feet
  The grass is all jewelled with flowers,
Where the violet raises its head 'mid the daisies,
  Fresh with the dew and the showers.

Here, where the swift swallows fly,
  Here let us wander together ;
Dearest, your eyes are as blue as the skies,
  And your smile is as bright as the weather.
Love in your look ever lies,
  It is springtime whene'er you are nigh ;
Come and see Nature's glory, and hear the old story
  Under the soft April sky.

Digitized by Google

THE DRUMMER-BOY.

EACEFUL he slept upon the field of battle,
After the carnage of the day was o'er,
When the loud guns were silent, and the rattle
Of muskets spoke no more.

All day in long array the rival foemen
Had fired and charged—fallen back, and charged again,
Until the pallid sun was sinking low, when
They left the heaps of slain.

Thick clouds obscured the stars, no moon in pity
Looked down, and darkly spread the heavens on high,
Save where, far South, the lights of some great city
Shone lurid in the sky.

And here we found our boy who, young and tender,
Lay dead beside his drum, all silent now:
The drumsticks dropping from his fingers slender,
The death-dew on his brow.

Digitized by Google

So fair, so still, as though with spread arms sleeping,
His uniform all stained with blood and mould,
He seemed to cry to us, above him weeping,
With dead lips sweet and cold.

We seemed to hear, the while our tears fell showering
On that pale face beside the shattered drum,
God's curse on war, as though from the heavens louring,
His awful voice had come.

And he, for whom the morn of life was breaking,
Young, brave and fair, with grace and vigour blessed,
Lay wrapped in sleep that knows no earthly waking,
With a bullet in his breast.

Digitized by Google

SONNETS FOR PICTURES.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE LAST MOOD OF LADY MACBETH.

(PAINTED BY D. G. ROSSETTI.)

WHAT means this mournful face above my bed?
What stealthy steps about my chamber creep?
Avaunt, thou fiend that criest, *No more sleep!* . . .
Blood will have blood, he mutters, and how red
This hand of mine! . . . Nay, Duncan, thou art dead,—
What dost thou hear? . . . Ah, daggers, strike him deep!
God! how he bleeds! . . . How now, my lord! Dost weep?—
Coward, give place! his blood be on my head!

Hush,—hush! who shrieks for mercy? . . . Nay, be calm!
Aha! 'twas fancy. . . . Hark! I hear the bell,—
One—two! . . . My brain, my brain! . . . The dawn? 'tis well. . . .
This blood again? . . . O, for sleep's blessed balm. . . .
The sky grows red!—out, damnèd crimson palm!
Blood! blood!—O God, it drags me down to hell!

Digitized by Google

THE FIRST MADNESS OF OPHELIA.

(PAINTED BY D. G. ROSSETTI.)

GOOD-NIGHT, sweet ladies!—I will sing no more
To ears so dull and sympathies so slow;
The boon has been in vain, for naught they know
To soothe this heart with sorrow burdened sore.
Ah, woe is me, who was so gay before,
And now am left forlorn! Where can I go
To tell my grief,—my dear lord lying low,
My Prince—my brother, far from native shore?

I'll get me to my wheel, and if its hum
Should fail my wandering senses to recall,
Perchance the nunnery might best befall;
I'll bring you posies when again I come,—
Trust me, the flowers shall speak though I be dumb;
So to my couch, and God be with you all!

Digitized by Google

BALACLAVA.

(PAINTED BY ELIZABETH BUTLER.)

THEY have come breathless through the deadly rain,
Like drowning men who struggle back to land,
A remnant of the gallant little band
That rode to certain death on errand vain;
Full many a one will ne'er see home again,
And these, with fainting heart and nerveless hand—
A ghastly group, bewildered and unmanned—
Sink senseless on the sward, or moan in pain.

But one, regardless of his comrades' cries,
Strides forth with head erect upon the hill;
The foeman's blood his blade with crimson dies,
His soul athirst for life has drunk its fill:
Unscathed he stands, and in his flashing eyes
The wild fierce light of battle flickers still.

Digitized by Google

A DESERT GRAVE.

(PAINTED BY ELIZABETH BUTLER.)

AH, leave him there beneath the Eastern sky,
Laid to his long last rest by loving hand,
Leave him to slumber on in that lone land,—
What matter now where his still form shall lie?
There let him sleep, where the jackal's distant cry
Throbs through the air and wakes the vulture-band,
And the River's voice calls o'er the burning sand,
Borne on the desert-blast when the moon is high.

He will not waken with the morning sun,
He will not faint beneath the noon-tide glare,
When Night steals on, with silent feet and fair,
For him alone the Day shall not be done:
His strife is o'er, his endless peace begun;
Egypt is but as England;—leave him there!

Digitized by Google

THE BOYHOOD OF RALEIGH.

(PAINTED BY J. E. MILLAIS.)

HE sun-lit waves and sweep of sea-birds' wings
Speak to thy heart; outspread is Fancy's sail,
And, while thine ears drink in the thrilling tale,
The summer breeze a clearer message brings,—
Of distant shores and southern seas it sings:
But why that wistful gaze and cheek so pale?—
Can those sweet serious eyes pierce through the veil
That shields thy soul from shadow of coming things?

What thoughts, fair boy, within thy bosom dwell?
Do visions dim disturb thy peaceful rest,
And dreams of after-days thy gladness mock?
Dost thou know aught of that dark prison-cell,
The treachery of friends, the fruitless quest,
The hate of princes, and the headsman's block?

Digitized by Google

ST. WILLIAM OF NORWICH.

WHEN twilight wrapped the tall cathedral spire,
With eyes uplifted in adoring mood
To the white Christ upon the Holy Rood
He sang at Vespers in the darkening choir;
Now, as the midnight-moon mounts ever higher,
With outstretched arms he hangs within the wood,
The awful wings of Death above him brood—
Martyred to glut the Hebrews' foul desire.

Fair as the Boy that Mary loved was he
In chanter's garb, nor has the beauty fled
From his still form with blood-stained limbs outspread;
The shadows deepen round the lonely tree,
But through the gathering gloom the angels see
The nimbus forming round his drooping head.

Digitized by Google

THE LOUD BASSOON.

(PAINTED BY T. BATHO.)

HE sat with rueful face without the door;
There floated from the banquet-hall within
The sound of merry voices, and the din
Of dancing feet upon the echoing floor;
Despite the wedding-garment that he wore
He lingered there and heard the feast begin,—
Vain was the call of flute and violin,
Those glittering eyes entranced him more and more.

Then, while the story bound him with its spell,
Chilled his warm blood and froze his beating heart,
Forgotten was the feast and the music there,
Till, when upon his ear a deep note fell,
He woke to recollection with a start,
And beat his breast with gesture of despair.

Digitized by Google

TIT-BITS.

(PAINTED BY CATHINCA AMYOT.)

HE sits him down, draws up his aproned knees,
And scans his bill of literary fare,
Devours with glee the morsels rich and rare,
But tastes of every course, from soup to cheese!
And now Puss licks her lips; and, by degrees
Approaching nearer his neglected ware,
She eyes the feast with great green orbs a-glare,
Scarce daring yet to credit what she sees!

Just as the gourmet in his cushioned chair
Goes through the dainty menu's gibberish,
And lingers gloating o'er each favourite dish,
So this gamin, with leg and arm half-bare;
And as he takes his tit-bits here and there,
Grimalkin coolly helps herself to fish!

Digitized by Google

TEN SONNETS ON

'THE ANCIENT MARINERE.'

Digitized by Google

[*Reproduced, with the assent of Mr. Harry Quilter, from* THE UNIVERSAL REVIEW *for Nov. 15th*, 1890.]

Digitized by Google

I.

'. . . *the lighthouse-top.*'

THE morning mists that veiled it with their shroud
Parted, and drifted seaward, till the town
Stood glimmering beneath it, and its crown
Gleamed in the early sunbeams ; as a proud
Tall monarch lifts his head above the crowd,
Upon the high church-tower it looked down,
And on the clustering masts, and on the brown
Broad sails that filled the harbour like a cloud.

The ship stood out to sea,—so swift her flight
Soon on the wave the church-tower seemed to swim,
Up the green hill-side rose the water's rim ;
And southward still she sailed in the sunshine bright,
Till e'en the lighthouse-top sank out of sight,
Hidden behind the ocean's distant brim.

Digitized by Google

II.

'. . . the mariners' hollo.'

NORTHWARD they sailed the crested waves across;
Silently they had watched the setting sun,
And wondered, now another day was done,
How long on southern seas the ship must toss,
Till, tired of reckoning final gain and loss,
They gathered in a group, sad thoughts to shun,
And with united voice, or one by one,
They shouted down the breeze for the albatross.

The darkening sky with eager eyes they searched,—
It came with dusky pinions, circling fast,
And swooped to catch the morsels that they cast;
Then ceased its flight,—amid the white sails perched,
Or, while the ship before the south wind lurched,
Sat swaying with folded wings upon the mast.

Digitized by Google

III.

'. . . *the white moonshine.*'

IN a dear distant land—their hearts' abode—
When fell the summer dusk, the harvest-moon
Rose o'er the bare brown field, a welcome boon
To reapers labouring at the day's last load;
All red behind the stubble-stalks she glowed,
Then beamed across the creaking wain, and soon
Shone high and golden as the sun at noon,
As up the heavens right royally she rode.

But on the mariners all the silent night
She looked down coldly; far from friendly coast,
Wrapped in a mist that hid the starry host,
They shuddered in the weird uncertain light,
And crossed themselves whene'er her visage white
Peered through the fog-wreath like some pallid ghost.

Digitized by Google

IV.

'The silence of the sea.'

LIKE strong stout-hearted steed that, whipped and spurred,
Bounds on, obedient to his master's will,
The ship drove fast before the wind, until
It died away without a warning word;
Suddenly—as the wings of a wounded bird
Flutter a moment, then drop stiff and still—
Her sails flapped once, and, with a mighty thrill
From stem to stern, she stopped, nor moved, nor stirred.

An unknown limitless sea lay all round,
Where tideless waters shone like burnished steel,
Where hollow rang their voices and unreal;
For there an awful silence reigned profound,—
No breath of breeze to break it, nor the sound
Of a ripple's listless plash against the keel.

Digitized by Google

V.

'The bloody sun . . .'

ALAS, of all mankind most wretched they,—
Sad men who from God's sunlight fain would fly!
Doomed in a torrid sea becalmed to lie,
Night was to them less fearful than the day,
For, as with savage glee a beast of prey
Gloats o'er its victims as they slowly die,
Heaven glared upon them with malignant eye,
And chased with fiery glance fair hope away.

Oft had they seen the setting sun gleam red,
When, in the wintry gloaming, down he sank
Through frost-fog gathered in a purple bank;
But, as he hung all crimson overhead,
His fierce rays filled their thirsty souls with dread,
And scorched to blackness sail and spar and plank.

Digitized by Google

VI.

'. . . the star-dogged moon.'

THROUGH misty curtains in the east afar
Uprose the tardy moon, and, pale and young
As timid queen her haughty lords among,
She scaled the heights of heaven with silvery car
Of crescent form, wherefrom a glittering star
Like morning rain-drop on a lily hung,
While on the silent sleeping sea were flung
The faint crossed shadows of the mast and spar.

The moonbeams shimmered round the fated ship,
And there one haggard mariner stood alone
Amid still forms upon the dark deck strown,
And watched from dusky sails the dank dews drip
On glassy sightless eye and voiceless lip,
For Death had won and claimed them for his own.

Digitized by Google

VII.

'. . . *the shadow of the ship.*'

IKE hoar-frost gleaming in the wintry glade,
Or snowy pall that blue clouds downward shake,
The sea, as placid as a sleeping lake,
Was white with midnight moonbeams; not a shade
But the black shadow that the death-ship made,
And not a tremor came the calm to break
Save where some restless wheeling water-snake
Reared up its crest with elfish light arrayed.

Round the still forms that nevermore would wake
And the lone mariner who knelt and prayed
The dark funereal ring of doom was laid;
But out beyond that circle of gloom opaque
There flashed full many a phosphorescent flake,
Where happy living creatures moved and played.

Digitized by Google

VIII.

'. . . *the gentle sleep.*'

HE knew not whence it came, nor how, nor why,
To break the lonesome vigil that he kept,—
Perchance from dreamy sunset lands it swept,
Or drowsy fields afar where poppies lie;
On soft invisible wings it fluttered nigh,—
Resistless languor o'er his senses crept,
And sealed his weary eyelids, and he slept
Till dawn's faint flush stole up the star-lit sky.

Then, with soft plash upon the silent main,
The drops came pattering down; heaven seemed to weep
Great tears of pity o'er the thirsty deep;
But he was lost in slumber once again,
Heedless alike of dawn and cloud and rain,
Close folded in the arms of gentle Sleep.

Digitized by Google

IX.

'. . . *the coming wind.*'

THE lover stands her wicket-gate before,
And hears from far within his lady's feet,
Who hastes with flying step her lord to greet
Down each long stair and echoing corridor;
She chides the close-barred portal more and more,
Impatient for the time their lips shall meet . . .
So to the mariner came a sound as sweet,
So welcomed he the loud wind's distant roar.

With straining ears and eyes but half-awake
He stood to watch the coming storm begin,
Whose very murmur thrilled the canvas thin;
With joy untold he felt the timbers shake,
And heard the sails a gentle music make,
Long doomed to deepest silence for his sin.

Digitized by Google

X.

'. . . *the lightning and the moon.*'

FROM out a looming wall of gathered wrack
The tropic rain in furious torrents poured,
With wild deep-throated voice the storm-fiend roared,
And churned to fury all the waters black;
And now heaven's firm foundations seemed to crack,—
Like one who leaps from dungeon-cell abhorred,
His prison-bars hewn down by his good sword,
The lightning fell in broad unbroken track.

Still while the tempest raged the fair moon shone;
Dimmed often by the lightning-flame, she cast
Redoubled radiance when the flash was past:
As when a king in troublous times looks on,
Smiles at his foes, bids all his fears begone,
And knows that he shall triumph at the last.

Digitized by Google

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

NIGHTFALL: TEIGNMOUTH.

ALONG the low sea-wall our engine tore,
And fiercely thundered on in iron pride;
With whirling wheels, that peace and rest defied,
Our flying train its weary burden bore;
But, gazing forth beyond the heat and roar,
Before us lay a quiet glassy tide,
With stars reflected in its bosom wide,
And tall ships anchored near the twinkling shore.

Here haste and work and tumult never cease,
Here there is no relief from toil and care,
And in Life's noisy march we sink oppressed;
But O, how sweet to think of Heaven's peace,
To see by faith the calm that waits us there,
And view that home of everlasting rest!

Digitized by Google

THE PROMISE OF SPRING: BUXTON GARDENS.

SLOW dies the wintry day; the winds of March
Break with their icy breath the evening hush,
And snow-clad hills reflect the sunset-flush
That paints with purple all heaven's western arch;
But, from the laden branches of the larch,
Upon the frosty air a happy thrush
Pours floods of melody, and flings a gush
Of gladsome music to the winds of March.

And thus, when Sorrow's Winter lingers long,
When with the eve there comes no vision sweet
To our sad eyes, and Hope has taken wing,
O, may some distant strain of seraph-song
Burst forth, and tell us that our faltering feet
Stand on the threshold of a joyous Spring!

Digitized by Google

MOONRISE: ASHTON-ON-MERSEY.

SULTRY has been the day, and the still air
Of evening stirs no leaf upon the tree, —
This level land is wilderness to me ;
The full moon, rising with a ruddy glare
Over green pastures, deepens my despair ;
From fields low-lying far as eye can see
My heavy heart cries through the heat to thee,
O wild hill-country that I deem so fair.

But yester-night I climbed the mountain-side ;
Beneath my feet, through the dim valley rolled,
The mist wrapped all the pathway, scarce discerned ;
From out the darkening moor the pee-wit cried,
Across the heather came the night-breeze cold,
And redly Mars above the cloud-bank burned.

Digitized by Google

JANUARY GLOAMING.

WITH angry flames dies out the stormy day,
A dull red glow where cloud and billow meet;
In fitful gusts upon my window beat
The chill sea-breezes, wet with driving spray,
And boats rock fiercely in the tossing bay;
Twilight broods o'er the narrow lamp-lit street
Where rain-pools shiver, and the hurrying feet
Of fisher-folk pass up the winding way.

These things for me; for thee a tropic clime,—
Methinks its bright birds flit before me now
As Fancy brings its wealth of beauty nigh;
Its southern fruits hang golden on the bough
In the mid-day heat of dreamy summer-time,
And a strange stillness falls from the cloudless sky.

Digitized by Google

AT THE TURN OF THE TIDE: LLYSFAEN HEAD.

To W. H. T.

SPECTRAL and dim looms forth the curving coast
As night draws down upon the shadowy bay;
The tide that ebbed with the departed day
Comes surging back with all its thundering host:
Under the headland, where it darkens most,
Smooth-crested billows crash with showers of spray,
And, anchored on the tossing water-way,
One shimmering bark rocks like a pallid ghost.

Onward the foaming tidal torrents pour,—
They break beneath the cliff with hollow boom,
And louder grows the changeless deep-toned roar;
In wailing gusts from out the gathering gloom
The wet night-wind blows inwards on the shore,
And drives the white sea-horses to their doom.

Digitized by Google

'GAINST WIND AND TIDE.

WHEN all the summer sea was calm and bright
The Ship shook out her canvas to the Day,
And rode majestically o'er the bay;
Her sails filled slowly in a land-breeze light,
And caught the morning sunbeams, and shone white
Above the blue; then, as she gathered way,
About her bows there rose a fan of spray,
And out to sea she sailed,—a noble sight.

But nobler when, with half her tackle gone,
She, in the teeth of wintry wind and rain,
Came beating back across the seething foam;
Wave-swept, she struggled in the twilight wan,
Reeling and then recovering again,—
Through storm and tempest steering straight for home!

Digitized by Google

HELPING HANDS.

ON a broad stream I saw a frail bark ride
That bravely strove to stem the current swift;
Vainly she toiled, and downward seemed to drift
Despite the labouring oars that ceaseless plied;
But soon she shook aloft her canvas wide,—
A breeze sprang up behind, a welcome gift;
I saw the white sail fill, the light bows lift,
Then, bounding on, she spurned the opposing tide.

And thus may we, upon Life's River cast,
Bear up the stream as wisely and as well;
Steady and strong though threatening surges swell,
Forbear to toil when earthly strength is past;
Lay hold upon the things invisible
Till unseen influence wafts us home at last.

Digitized by Google

A GARDEN OF SLEEP.

VER this garden of an age gone by
None but the dreamy southern breezes sweep,
And fragrant old-time memories, soft as sleep,
Haunt its fair bowers and crown its cedars high ;
A myriad nights beneath the star-lit sky
These silent paths have lain in slumber deep,
And woke to see the white dawn onward creep,
And watched the crimson hues of evening die.

And here beside the pool the bright-eyed toad
Has sat for centuries, securely screened,
While bees buzzed by and birds their plumage preened,
And the green lizard from his dark abode
Has stolen forth, and in the sunlight glowed,
And the stone naiad o'er the fountain leaned.

Digitized by Google

THE SMITHY BY THE WOOD: BRYN EURYN.

To E. D. J.

IT stands half-hidden in the green-wood's edge,
Its music greets the dawn that glimmers white
Before the sunbeams chase away the night,
Or the first warbler twitters in the sedge;
All day the anvil rings beneath the sledge,
The forge-fires roar, and gleam with ruddy light
Till crimson sunset crowns the distant height,
And all its fringes fade along the ledge.

Then, though the whispering leaves above it bend,
And night-birds call, and moonbeams round it play,
The voices of the smithy die away;
When in the dusk the evening dews descend
In silent slumber all its labours end,—
Its music mute, its ashes cold and gray.

Digitized by Google

MOONLIGHT ON THE LAKE: LLANELIAN.

To F. N.

IN the deep hush of gloaming sad and chill
The lonely mere in silent slumber lay,
Unruffled were its waters, darkly gray,
And all its sentinel reeds stood stiff and still;
The pee-wit's last good-night was faint and shrill,
The west was dusky-brown with dying day,
When came, along the sky-line far away,
The gleam of moonrise o'er the distant hill.

Like flame that flashes through the cannon-smoke
A full moon climbed above the bending furze,—
The rushes felt that herald-breeze of hers;
They whispered to the water that awoke,
Athwart its face a golden ripple broke,
And the Queen kissed her nightly worshippers.

Digitized by Google

MISTY TWILIGHT: Y FOEL FRAS.

DAY flickered out among the mountains bleak,
Impenetrable mist was over all,
And, like a white flower on a sombre pall,
The lake shone steely-gray, a glimmering streak:
Chasing the shadowy waves from peak to peak
The sea-breeze blew as night began to fall,—
Rolled the cloud-curtain up the rocky wall,
And lifted off the veil from Nature's cheek.

The ridge gigantic loomed from out the haze,
Its crest appeared, above whose towering crown
A great star glittered like a chrysoprase,—
The coast below, with every twinkling town,
The darkening straits beneath a sunset brown,
And, seaward far, the ruddy lighthouse-blaze.

Digitized by Google

SUNNY WEATHER: LLYN CRAFNANT.

To E. O. G.

FROM her deep winter slumber scarce awake
Nature had lost her count of weeks and days,
For as we went along the upland ways
She wore her summer vesture by mistake:
A balmy breeze was stirring in the brake,
Steep wooded heights, sun-saturate, met our gaze,—
A tumbling streamlet singing cheery lays,—
Then, last, the shining level of the lake.

Its listless waters, stretching at our feet,
By towering sun-lit summits were surrounded,
Among the rocks its plashing ripples sounded;
The sunbeams turned it to a silver sheet,
And with incessant music, low and sweet,
From out its breast the little streamlet bounded.

Digitized by Google

THE GRAVE-YARD BY THE SEA: LLANDRILLO.

To J. J. T. F.

WITHIN the shadow of the hill-church lies
Our cherished dust that waits the dawn of Day;
Unheeded ripples now the rock-bound bay,
And the blue ridges of the mountains rise;
He slumbers, though the wheeling sea-bird cries,
Though pulsing waters in a solemn lay
Sing *Dona Pacem* for his soul alway,
And rain-drops patter down from brooding skies.

His is the stillness of the Blessed Dead:
The wild wind wails above him fitfully,
And never quiet is the sobbing sea,
But he sleeps silent in his lonely bed,
And lovingly we whisper o'er his head,
Labour in Time—rest in Eternity!

Digitized by Google

SUNSET FIRES: GLYN CONWY.

THE western ridges, scarce an hour ago
When purple sunset-curtains were outspread,
Grew dim and solemn as the daylight fled,
Sharply defined against the fading glow:
Then rose a ruddy moon that, hanging low,
Lit in the darkening east her beacon red,
The sad spring twilight deepened overhead,
And soft and fresh the night-wind 'gan to blow.

Now all the southern sky bursts into blaze,
Where flaming gorse flings banners to the breeze
Upon the hill-top, high above the trees;
On cliff and cloud the flickering fire-light plays,
And smoke-wreaths gather in a crimson haze,
Like mists of morning on the dawn-touched leas.

Digitized by Google

RAINY DAY-BREAK: FAIRY CROFT.

I NEED not even lift my head to see
That the dim fields are wet with early rain,—
I hear its gentle patter on the pane
And wonder vaguely what the hour may be;
The pearly light grows stronger; every tree
Stands out of the gray mist distinct and plain,
And from the hedge-rows of the dripping lane
The ceaseless twitter of birds comes up to me.

A little breeze springs up, and o'er the sky
Masses of laden cloud begin to sweep,
While from the meadow-land the shadows creep;
A clock below strikes four, and with a sigh
I reckon up how long I have to lie,
And wonder how it is I cannot sleep.

Digitized by Google

AUTUMN AT THE MOATED GRANGE.

'Joy to you, Mariana!'—MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

WITHOUT her window, when she wakes from sleep,
The first light flickers on the ivy-leaves,
Anon, red sunset-shafts slant through her eaves,
And from the darkening azure pale stars peep;
At noon, in the fields afar where reapers reap,
The spring-sown corn shines in its golden sheaves;
The fruit-full orchard, where she sits and weaves,
Was white with bloom when summer days were deep.

Thus times and seasons change, and years go by,
Till from her great soul-sorrow she has turned
To hearken what the voice of Nature saith;
And when the autumn of her days draws nigh
She will not strive nor weep, for she has learned
How to see Death in Life, and Life through Death.

Digitized by Google

FAIRY FOUNTAINS.

HAFTS of soft colour pierce the autumnal night,
Where, in the dusk, the fairy fountains play,
And, marshalled in harmonious array,
Prismatic hues flash through the mount of light;
Colossal columns tower to giddy height
And fling aloft a crown of glittering spray,—
Orange, and violet, and crimson gay,
Purple, and gleaming gold, and silvery white.

Anon the fiery streams together blend,
Or one alone its glowing head uprears
Above a pearly cloud of seething mist,
Or all to graceful crested curves descend,—
Each falling drop a priceless gem appears,
Ruby, or emerald, or amethyst.

Digitized by Google

AT A BALL.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF HENRI CAZALIS.)

YOU, whose glances, radiantly bright,
Gleamed like the glitter of a dawn-touched mere,
Who did so joyous and so fair appear,
All satin-robed, with figure tall and slight,
Who shone as shines a spring-day's earliest light,
Whose features, nobly-cut and coldly-clear,
Recalled the faces pallidly severe
Of Fiesole virgins, pure and white :—

O you, who lit my being with the blue
Of your sweet eyes, and with your musical tone
Revived all raptures that my heart had known,—
I dare not tell how, all the evening through,
You were my star, your breath my life alone,
And how my whole brain reeled for love of you !

Digitized by Google

THE AWAKENING OF IPHIGENIA.

WITH youth and love and innocency blest,
Treading with careless feet the flower-strewn way,
Life beamed upon her with a sunny ray,
And all her world in fairest colours dressed;
She had not learned to think, nor dreamed, nor guessed,—
Her dancing heart was ever light and gay,
Each hour brought joy and mirth, and each new day
Dawned clear and cloudless in her happy breast.

Then suddenly her soul's unopened eyes
To doubt and sorrow, pain and tears, awoke,
And while the dawn of knowledge o'er them broke
She paused with blanching cheek and bated breath;—
A strange vague voice that came to make her wise
Was whispering in her ear the one word, *Death!*

Digitized by Google

TRANSPLANTED.

To A. E. T.

I CHANCED one day upon a garden fair,
Where, lifting to the sun its dainty head,
A radiant rose its royal perfume shed,
The queen of all the flowers that flourished there;
Then called I to those flowers their queen to spare,
And, half-reluctant, bore it from its bed;
Now, to my sterile garden transplanted,
It blossoms bright and sweetens all the air.

Why should it mourn to leave that sunny scene
Where late the crown of sovereignty it bore?
Why should it sigh for by-gone days once more?
Has it from its high place degraded been?
Is it not hailed in my bare plot as queen—
Perchance with truer homage than before?

Digitized by Google

AN OLD HAT.

AS a dead violet will oft retain
Its fragrance through dark days that come and go,
Recalling the springtime, when violets blow,
Shielded by sheltering leaves, upon the plain:
As in an aged letter may remain
Some old-time words that fill our hearts with woe,
Or cause a stream of joyous thought to flow,
Bearing us back into the past again:

So, when I brought my old school-hat to light,
Its faded ribbon still around the straw,
A flood of thought rushed o'er me at the sight,
And, thinking of the scenes that Fancy saw,
The happy memories of a careless boy
Filled my worn heart with mingled grief and joy.

Digitized by Google

WHAT THE HEART OF THE SCHOOLBOY SAID TO THE MORNING-BELL.

I.

IN JUNE.

PLEASANT it is on each returning morn
To waken at thy call, O cheery bell,—
Rise from my dreams, and casting off their spell,
The drowsy god and his allurements scorn;
Happy I leave the ease of slumber born,
And, looking forward with the hopes that dwell
For ever in the young, my pulses swell
As the hound wakens at the hunter's horn.

So do I meet the duties of the day,
Its pains and pleasures, with expectant joy,
And with the blitheness of a careless boy
My mind is merry and my heart is gay;
Gladly I greet the notes that round me ring,—
Those notes as light as air, as fresh as spring!

Digitized by Google

II.

IN DECEMBER.

PROUD bell, that clangest from thy brazen throat
And wak'st me daily with thy restless tongue,
How often I devoutly wish thee hung,—
If hanging might perchance subdue thy note!
How loud thy clamourings round my chamber float,
Less welcome than all evils said or sung!
For ever in the stillness sharply rung,
Thou break'st the slumber upon which I dote!

Sleeping serenely in a morning doze,
Thy summons, tyrant, dissipates my dream,
Thy voice's echoes linger on, and seem
To end life's pleasures and commence its woes;
My only hours of happiness and ease
Are more or fewer just as thou mayst please!

Digitized by Google

JONES AT THE TOURNAMENT.

I.

JONES IS GOING TO WIN.

DRAWN against Robinson? O, what a spree!—
I say, you fellows, isn't this a go?
I'll simply eat the beggar up, you know,—
You can just put your bottom coin on me!
It's rough on poor old Robinson! you'll see
He'll never take my service, he's that slow;
Perhaps he'll let me have a 'w. o.,'—
I'd chuck it up at once if I were he!

I could give him half-thirty any day,
His volleys always go clean out of court,
He's got no back-hand stroke at all, they say,
And you should see him serve,—it's awful sport!
Now mind you all turn up to see me play,
If I don't win two love-sets,—well, I ought!

Digitized by Google

II.

JONES HAS LOST.

SHUT up your row, you chaps! why, I declare
You talk as if I'd sold you! you forget
What brutal luck I had that second set,—
He won three games by downright flukes, I swear!
I don't believe those line-umpires were fair,
Robinson volleyed bang across the net;
I took more strokes than he did though, I'll bet!
Say what you like; you needn't think I care!

He served before I'd time to turn about,
And look how many times his service shot!
That beastly wind took all my placing out,
Another day I'd lick him all to pot:
Don't think I'm in a wax (oh, you may shout!),
If that's the idea, I tell you straight, I'm not!

Digitized by Google

A PORTRAIT.

BEFORE the heavy cross of each new day
Has cast its shadow over me, I go
And stand before it with faint heart, till, lo!
I gather strength to tread the toilsome way;
And then when night has come it seems to say,
How? weary of life's bitterness and woe?
What then of Love and Hope and Faith? and so
It bids me rest on these, and I obey.

O smiling lips, O truthful trustful eyes,
O spirit bright that sorrow could not break,
O steadfast soul Life's tempests failed to shake,—
I, too, would daily be as brave and wise,
O, help me from the dust of earth to rise,
And teach me to be strong, for thy strength's sake!

Digitized by Google

FAREWELL.

To E. K. T.

KIND *Welcomes* oft we use our friends to greet,
And speed them on their journey with *Farewells:*
This old-time language scarce our feeling tells,
Habit has made its import incomplete;
Little we think when, parting, we repeat
Each light *Good-bye*, that *God be with you* dwells
Enshrined within, for time the charm dispels,
New meaning now supplants that prayer so sweet.

Then hear me while this last good-bye I say,
And though I speak the words with merry smile,
Yet know 'tis from a heart sincere and true;
Lest custom cold should sweep my wish away,
O, doubt not that I'm praying all the while,
Really and truly God *will* be with you!

Digitized by Google

THE CRICKET CAPTAIN.

To C. F. F.

FRESH from the field, with cheek of healthy hue,
Yours is young David's beauty debonair—
A ruddy countenance and yellow hair,
And even as his your eye and hand are true;
And yours is might above your fellows, too,—
Already wreaths of victory you wear;
Like him who slew the lion and the bear
Sturdy and straight of limb and bold are you.

And will you, like the ancient warrior-king,
Lift up your arm against the giant Wrong,—
Stand fast for Right, a champion of the Truth?
For this indeed is the one noble thing,—
Just in the strength of Goodness to be strong,
And with all Virtue beautify your youth!

Digitized by Google

THE GOOD FIGHT.

To B. M.

GOD bless you, little soldier of the Lord,
Who have for Him already bravely fought,—
Some of your Captain's spirit you have caught,
That you, thus young, should wield such trenchant sword!
To me, with sin-stained soul but new restored,
A lesson deep your youthful faith has taught,
You found Him early whom you early sought,
Battling in boyhood for the great reward.

To you the final victory is sure;
For me, alas, no certain triumphs wait,
Such fear of failure marks my militant state;
But you, because your heart was ever pure,
Will pass through Life unscathed, through Death secure,
And enter boldly at the Golden Gate.

Digitized by Google

DICK THE TRUMPETER.

(IN 'THE CURATE.')

HE fell in duty's cause, so brave, so young,
He died for England 'mid the Russian snow,
Nerved by that 'little prayer' he faced his foe,
And to his base demand defiance flung;
To his despatches as to life he clung,—
Then came the coward thrust, the fatal blow:
Ah, it was hard to hear that shriek of woe
From the sweet lips that had so gaily sung!

'The Kingdom is of such,' the Master saith:
'Such a bright light' he saw; that golden ray
Welcomed him home,—why should he care to stay?
He 'went to Mother'—it was scarcely death,
Forgave his murderer with his latest breath,
And 'reached a fairer region, far away.'

Digitized by Google

REX GLORIÆ.

To J. H. B.

(The modern form of Church architecture may be traced back to the Roman *Basilicæ*, and the Chancel corresponds to that part of the Court where the accused would stand; his accusers being ranged on either side.)

THE vaulted chancel rings with joyous song,
And, as we hear Thy praises heavenward rise,
We pierce the ages dim with fancy's eyes,
And see Thee standing 'midst a frenzied throng
That pants with fierce desire to do Thee wrong,
And fills the Judgment Hall with savage cries;—
Thou Son of Man, arrayed in Victim's guise,
How great Thy woe, Thine agony how strong!

Now, Saviour Christ, Thy glorious triumph see!
Where then Thou stood'st, condemned, despised, abhorred,
The Altar of Thy Presence is adored;
No howling foes surround that Sign of Thee,
But white-robed worshippers, who bow the knee,
And hail Thee King of Earth and Heaven's Lord!

Digitized by Google

IN THE CHURCHYARD.

WHEN hardest was the struggle to be brave,
And see the sunlight through our cloud of grief,
Down from bare boughs above, one withered leaf
Fluttered into the little open grave
And whispered thoughts which hope and comfort gave:
We knew that winter's stormy spell was brief,
And trees would greener grow, and shake their sheaf
Of foliage, and their golden blossoms wave.

We wrote *Resurget* on our darling's stone,
And left him sleeping there with fast-closed eyes;
That precious form we might not call our own
Will slumber on till God shall bid it rise,
And in His Garden bloom with grace unknown,—
The fairest, sweetest flower in Paradise.

Digitized by Google

IN MEMORIAM: A. L. M.

BUT late he sang on earth of heavenly things,
And armed him early for the holy fight;
Scarce on the threshold of Life's darksome night
He never knew the fevered dreams it brings,
And now with clearer, sweeter voice he sings,
For him already faith is lost in sight,
Changed is the chanter's earthly garb of white
For robes of Paradise and spirit-wings.

Ah, happy boy, so soon to be set free!
Thus young from pain and passion to depart,
No bitter tears were his, no weary way:
Where reigns a beauty not of land or sea
He waits the guerdon of the pure in heart,
The golden splendour of eternal day.

Digitized by Google

DYING IN SUMMER.

SUMMER'S soft breezes with their balmy sigh
Breathe o'er my head the open casement through;
Lift me once more to see the smiling view
Of meadows green beneath the cloudless sky;
But I must soon beneath the blossoms lie,
For the last time I look on heavens blue,
And sunny earth, and flowers of brilliant hue,
And feel that summer is the time to die.

Now take my hand, and say a last farewell,
For dark to me grows this resplendent day,
And, though you hold me fast, I cannot stay;
For I have fairer dreams than I can tell,
And breathe a purer air, and feel the spell
Of an eternal summer far away.

Digitized by Google

'WITH YOU ALWAY.'

To E. G.

HE led thee all the way thou camest through,
He Who has loved thee with a love so dear,
And now at eventide He draws more near,
And promises still greater things to do;
The vale is nigh, thy sands of life are few,
Darkened are they that from the windows peer,
And earthly sounds fall faint upon thine ear,
But still He leads thee on,—the Shepherd True.

He comes when nearly loosed the silver cord,
He pours new eye-sight on thine eyes, and see—
The King in all His beauty near thee stands!
And strength is thine, for lo, the gracious Lord
With His Own Presence overshadows thee,
And puts the Bread of Life into thy hands.

Digitized by Google

LOVE-DAWN.

OLD, cold and clouded are the heavy skies,
All cheerless is the morn and sad the scene,
And vainly kept our weary watch has been,
Till in the heavens the golden sun arise;
Dark, dark and desolate when daylight dies
The shadows gather round us, if night's queen
Shed not upon the earth her silver sheen,
In whose effulgence fear to exile flies.

Of old no bliss, no happiness I knew,
No radiance o'er my pathway did I see,
Naught to encourage, nothing to be won;
Ere Love upon my soul its glamour threw,
Sad was my heart, and all the world to me
A moonless night, a day without a sun!

Digitized by Google

CONQUERING LOVE.

THE river late lay bound by icy band,
All motionless its waters, hushed its sound,
Silence and desolation reigned profound—
So pitiless the power of Winter's hand;
But now gay verdure decks the sun-lit land,
The current courses onward, swirling round
Its grassy banks, with flags of beauty crowned
That bend and bow by fragrant breezes fanned.

Ah, Life to me was dull and drear and sad,
And slowly flowed, a dark and sullen stream,
Till Love arose and shattered all the spell;
Love brings perennial spring the heart to glad,
And present joy that makes the past a dream,—
Fond Love, that Time and Fate can never quell!

Digitized by Google

LOVE'S DOMAIN.

THERE is, above the clouds so darkly flying,
A sunny atmosphere where skies are blue,
An unseen height of heaven whereunto
No rain-cloud soars, no sullen wind comes sighing:
There is a hidden depth of ocean, lying
Untroubled though the storm be raging,—who
That looked upon its calm would deem it true
That waves were roaring loud and sea-birds crying?

So deep, so high, in Love's Domain I'm sleeping,
And only hear, as in a dream one hears,
How fierce the distant storms of Life are sweeping;
The slumbrous silence of my golden years
No voice of passion breaks, nor sound of weeping,—
Far, far away, beyond the reach of tears!

Digitized by Google

FOR A BIRTHDAY.

To E. M. L. S.

TO-DAY I woke to see the wintry sun
Cast rosy gleams upon a world of white,
And hailed the radiant morning with delight,
Remembering 'twas your birthday, little one;
And thus, thought I, has your young life begun,—
Pure as the snow, as crystal morning bright,
And all day long I prayed that you aright
Might spend your happy years till life was done.

I care not if no fame or wealth you earn,
I do not dream, sweet as you are and fair,
That greatness will be yours or high renown;
But I have prayed, heart's dearest, you may learn
To scorn the honours of the world, and wear
A nobler and a more enduring crown.

Digitized by Google

DISENCHANTMENT.

'*True love's truth . . . light love's art.*'—SWINBURNE.

THROUGH all the high mid-summer of my days
A gladsome careless company I kept,
And Life was song and laughter as we stepped
With joyous feet adown its primrose-ways:
You stood aloof, without the charmèd maze,
And beckoned with your hand, and softly wept
To see how soundly my soul-vision slept,
Lulled to repose with hollow smiles and praise.

Then fell the Doom upon me, black as night,
And when I wandered 'neath gray skies alone,—
My summer fled, my friends like swallows flown,—
You came, rejoiced my shadowed lot to share,
You shed upon my path Love's truest light,
And cheered my winter with your tender care.

Digitized by Google

HEART'S DESIRE.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO.)

HEAVEN-BESPRINKLED plot of grassy ground,
Where creepers flaunt their fragrant crests on high,
Where lily-bells in rich profusion lie,
And some fair blossom blows the whole year round:
A gallant breast, that struggles to be crowned
With Honour's diadem, yet can defy
All grief and sadness that may come a-nigh,
Because in it Love's deepest joys abound:—

Such breast thy pillow be, such plot thy path!
And O, may slumber bring to thee, I pray,
Some rapturous dream of Love that, day by day,
Shall cling like scent of roses,—one that hath
A spell God-given to shield thy soul from wrath,
And drive inconstancy and doubt away!

Digitized by Google

SHIPWRECK.

ALAS, 'twere sad indeed if future years
Should wreck the promise of your golden days,
If you should leave these peaceful water-ways
And choose the perilous sea of storm and tears;
Vain is my care, for each his own course steers,
But when you sail beyond my loving gaze,
O, may you still a flag unsullied raise,
And my fond hopes prove truer than my fears!

No sadder sight beneath the sun could be
If I should see you once again, and cry
In piteous wonderment, Ah, can it be
You, who were all my joy in times gone by,
When I beheld you, innocent and sweet,
And prayed, *God bless those little hands and feet?*

Digitized by Google

LOVE'S WISDOM.

IF Death alone can make us fully pure,
If Life is powerless to protect and save
The innocence which to each one she gave,
Then what care I how long your days endure?
For Life at best is short, and Death is sure,
And Love will not be buried in the grave,
And your sweet soul would flourish true and brave
Where earthly wiles must cease to charm and lure.

'Tis for your sake and mine that I desire
No lengthened days for you; if Virtue fly
And sin-stained you become, that were to die!
But it were Life to keep your truth entire,
And now I know Death is the only fire
That could your wayward spirit purify.

Digitized by Google

IRREPARABLE.

LONG years ago I drove him from my breast,—
Old Love, with gentle voice and sweet fair face;
I marked his backward glance, his lingering pace,
His bosom with deep silent sobs oppressed,
Then straightway welcomed in another guest,—
The New Love came, and filled the vacant place;
Ah me! too soon I proved him vilely base,
And now I know the dear Old Love was best.

Old Love! Old Love! my heart is full of fears;
I call to thee from depths of dark despair,
For round about me clouds have gathered black . . .
In vain, alas, are all my bitter tears,
Unseen my helpless hands stretched forth in prayer,—
The dear dead Love will never more come back!

Digitized by Google

LOVE'S MIRAGE.

I VIEWED Love's Land from far,—the sunbeams poured
Upon its pastures green and waters bright,
A Land that promised peace and pure delight,
With verdure clad, with richest plenty stored:
Such smiling view did Sodom's Vale afford
When, as Lot gazed to eastward from the height,
The Plain of Jordan lay beneath his sight,
As beauteous as the Garden of the Lord.

I chose Love's Land, and as I journeyed nigher
Its hidden tombs sent forth no warning voice,
Though now I hear both Death and Hell rejoice;
All unfulfilled my foolish heart's desire,
I dread the day when God's consuming fire
Shall fall and smite the country of my choice.

Digitized by Google

TONGUES IN TREES.

(*As You Like It*, Act ii., Scene 1.)

THE poplar towering at my garden-gate
Last winter's tempest tore up by the root,—
It blessed no beast or bird, it bore no fruit,
Its single glory was its high estate :
Now on its boughs the lizard sits sedate,
The black-bird rests awhile and pipes his flute,
Above it beetles hum and owlets hoot,
Beneath, the bright-eyed field-mouse wooes his mate.

So selfish was my soul when, proud and blind,
Like the tall poplar tree aloft it soared,
All things save self forgotten or abhorred ;
Felled by a hurricane it deemed unkind,
Its end in lowly things it learned to find,—
Then found in lowliness its great reward.

Digitized by Google

LOVE'S LAND-MARK.

THE sailor steering by the northern star
A steady changeless beacon has secured,
He sees its fixèd flame, and feels assured
When other guiding lights are distant far:
In harbour riding, where strong currents are,
Watching the buoy, unalterably moored,
He knows his bark slips silently to leeward,
And slowly drags her anchor o'er the bar.

Thus in my history is Love's land-mark set,—
An hour of bliss immeasurably deep;
But now, in these last days of vain regret,
I dare not stir the memories that I keep,
Lest I should waken from a charmèd sleep,
And find that I am learning to forget.

Digitized by Google

A LAST FAREWELL.

LEAN o'er me, love ; stoop down and lay your cheek
Against my own ! ah, how I yearn to throw
My arms around your neck and kiss you ; though
To answer thus my body is too weak,
What greater hope and comfort could I seek
In this all-dreaded hour than parting so?—
Your love the latest thing my senses know,
And your dear name the last my lips shall speak.

Now on my eyelids falls the Shadow of Death,—
'Tis thus I dreamed of dying, hand in hand,
And I have prayed that in the Silent Land
My spirit may with yours its oneness keep,
So that my heart may hear what your heart saith,
Dance when you smile, and sorrow when you weep.

Digitized by Google

IDOLATRY.

WHEN sunset-fires shone redly through the haze,
On the horizon gleamed a radiant star,—
Softly it glimmered o'er the distant bar,
And held imprisoned my enraptured gaze;
Vainly the greater light with lurid blaze
Kindled to living flame the waters far,
Vainly I longed to track his blood-red car,—
Above that star my glance I could not raise.

From heaven beam forth my darling's glorious eyes—
My Love, my Life, gone from me, lifted higher;
Above those stars my thoughts refuse to rise
To the great Sun that shines with crimson fire;
Ah, God, forgive me that beyond the skies
Those azure orbs should be my chief desire!

Digitized by Google

THROUGH THE MIST OF YEARS.

DEEP-BURIED now, my dear dead days of love
Will not return to me, for envious Fate
Holds them in keeping ever obdurate,—
Yea, even the Hour all other hours above,
That pearl among my sands of life, whereof
The mere sweet memory, fair and delicate,
With measureless content my soul can sate,
For to have lived it once is joy enough !

But of my golden days I still may dream,
For when the light of Love, that never dies,
Shines through my House of Life, it glorifies
One hall, remote and darkened, with its beam,
Where certain hours around one Hour Supreme
With folded wings are sitting circle-wise.

FINIS.

Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row, London.

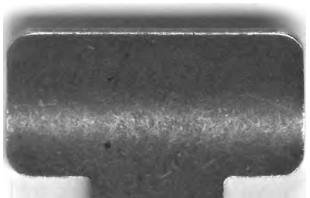
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google